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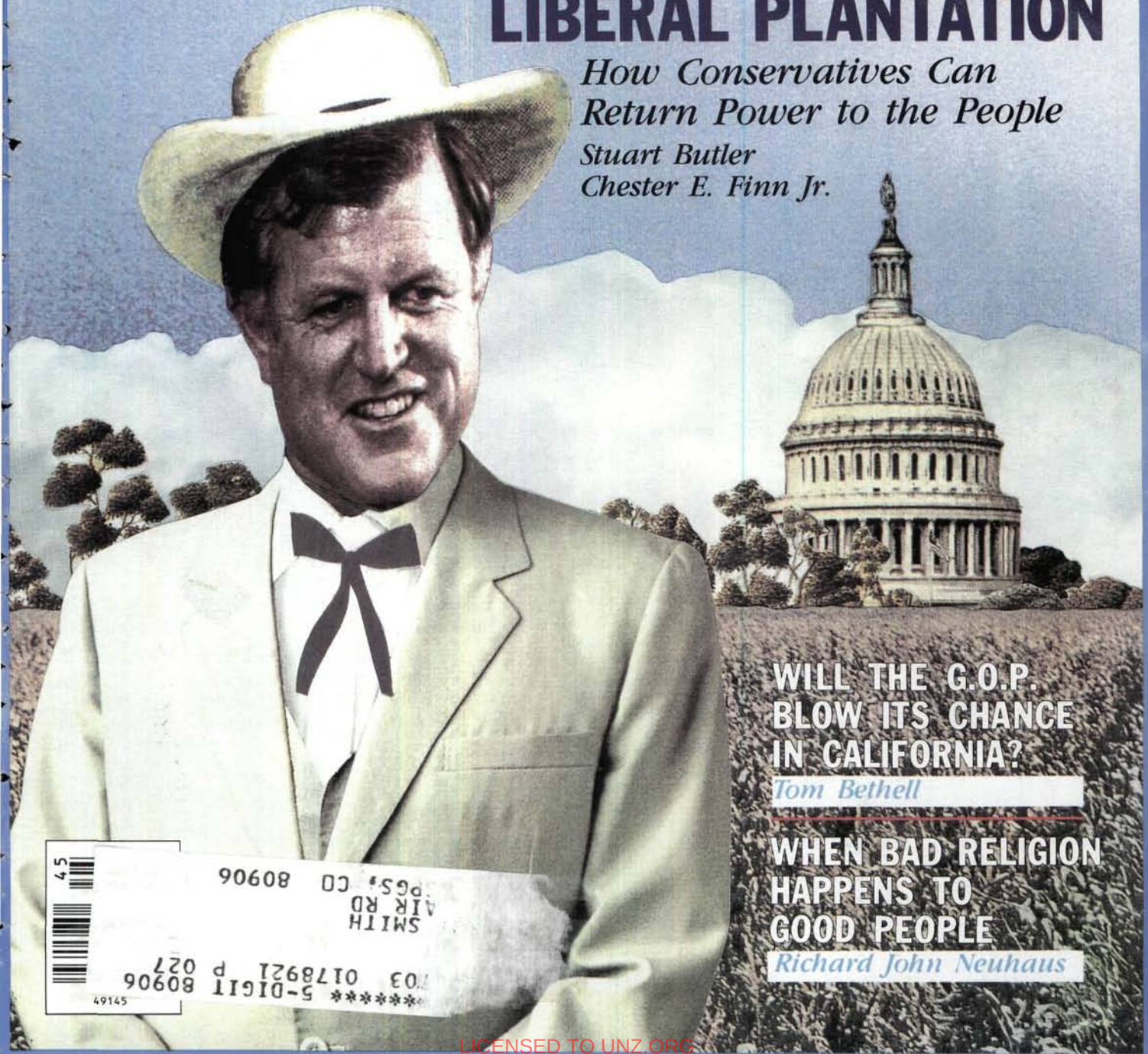

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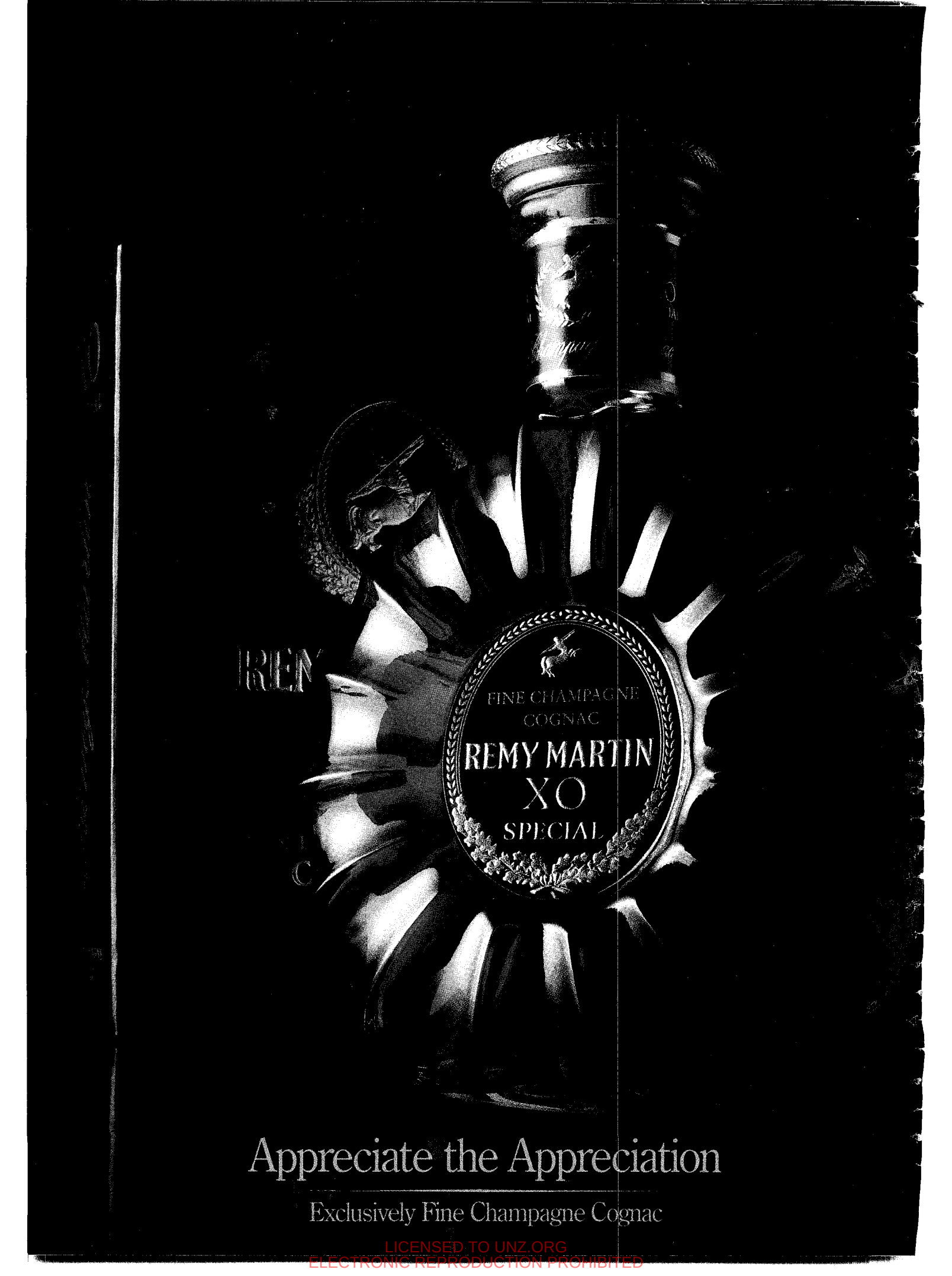

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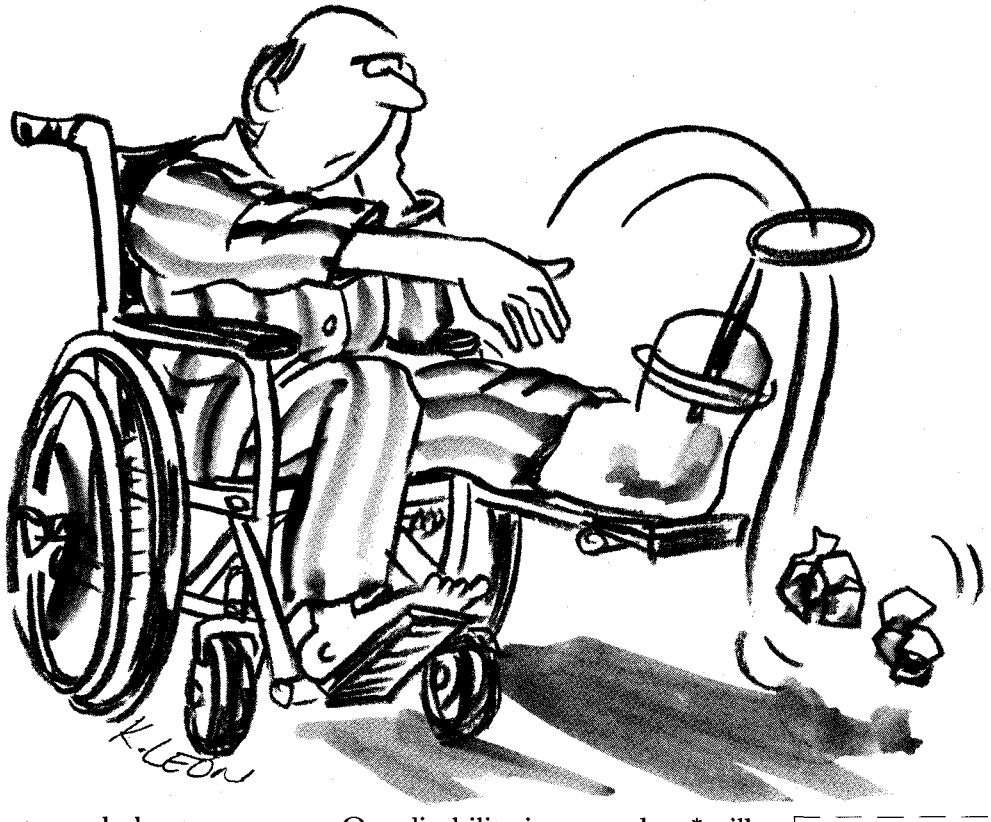

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Braque in Picasso's studio in Paris, c. 1911

Picasso wearing Braque's uniform, c. 1911

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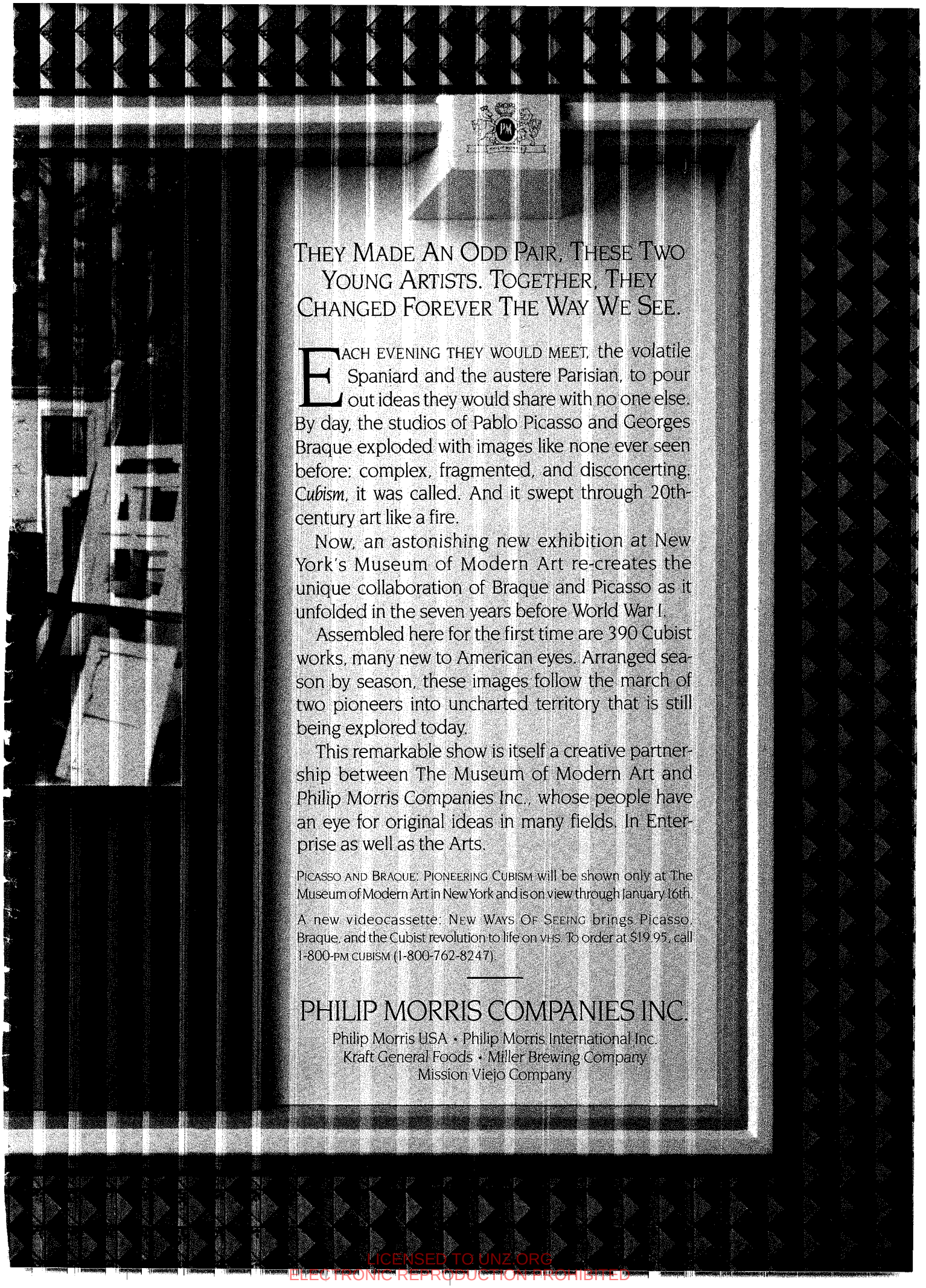

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NATIONAL REVIEW

NOVEMBER 10, 1989 VOL. XLI, NO. 21

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Cover illustration by Victoria Kann

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LETTERS

Socialism's Last Enclave

Tom Bethell eloquently raises the important issue that socialism, while apparently falling apart in the East, is thriving in economics textbooks in the West ["Socialism by the Textbook," Oct. 13]. It is critical to note, however, that it is not only economics textbooks in which professors extol the virtues of socialism.

For instance, in *The Human Adventure*, used in his California State University, Long Beach, anthropology class, Eugene Ruyle writes, "The problems we face as a species flow from the present system of class rule, capitalism. The solution is revolution. If our species is to survive, we must complete the world revolution that is currently in progress. I am optimistic that we can do so, and I hope my book will contribute to the clarity of purpose necessary for this task."

Ruyle also writes that the socialist revolution in the U.S. will probably begin with the overthrow of the top five hundred corporations and the replacement of their boards with socialist directors who will use social need rather than profit maximization as the basis for decision-making.

It is no secret that the radical Left in America has retreated to the universities. Almost daily, my organization receives complaints from students about professors abusing their classroom podia to advance socialist goals.

Leslie Carbone
Executive Director
Accuracy in Academia
Washington, D.C.

Far-Away Eyes

I just read Wick Allison's article, "How to Win an Election" [Oct. 13]. I was surprised at his criticism of the staff and chairman of the National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC). As someone who recently participated in a successful special election in Wyoming (April 1989) with the assistance of the NRCC, I would like to comment on his views.

The entire NRCC staff served me and my campaign with professional assistance and advice. As in any effort, there were early organizational problems, but overall the work of the NRCC was proficient and on target.

Mr. Allison advocates local campaigns with local solutions to problems at home, as though his were a new idea. My special-election campaign was run on local issues, and decisions with respect to those issues were made locally; the NRCC staff shared in that effort with success.

There is an inherent irony in Mr. Allison's armchair perspective on local campaign organization. Had Mr. Allison taken time to call before he wrote his article, he might have had a somewhat different point of view based on the experiences of someone who has been directly involved in winning an election at home.

Craig Thomas
Member of Congress
Washington, D.C.

Mr. Allison's premise that the 1992 elections are pivotal for Republican hopes to win outright, or effective, control of the House is correct. From that point on, however, he fails to understand the realities of the situation.

Although Mr. Allison acknowledges that the NRCC was the first of the party campaign committees to become a modern, professional political force, he contends that it is to blame for the GOP's inability to close the gap in the House since the 1980 election.

In 1982, with the scent of realignment in the air and a top-flight crop of young conservative GOP challengers, the party seemed poised to build on its substantial gains in the 1980 election—only to have a severe recession intervene, with a resulting loss of 26 seats.

In 1984, the GOP share of the House vote surged in most congressional districts, but Ronald Reagan's coattails were not quite long enough to win more than a few seats. At that time, the view among Democratic strategists was that they had narrowly averted a political disaster.

Candidly speaking, the NRCC's 1987–1988 effort was not one of the strongest we have seen. The recognition of that fact no doubt resulted in heavy pressure

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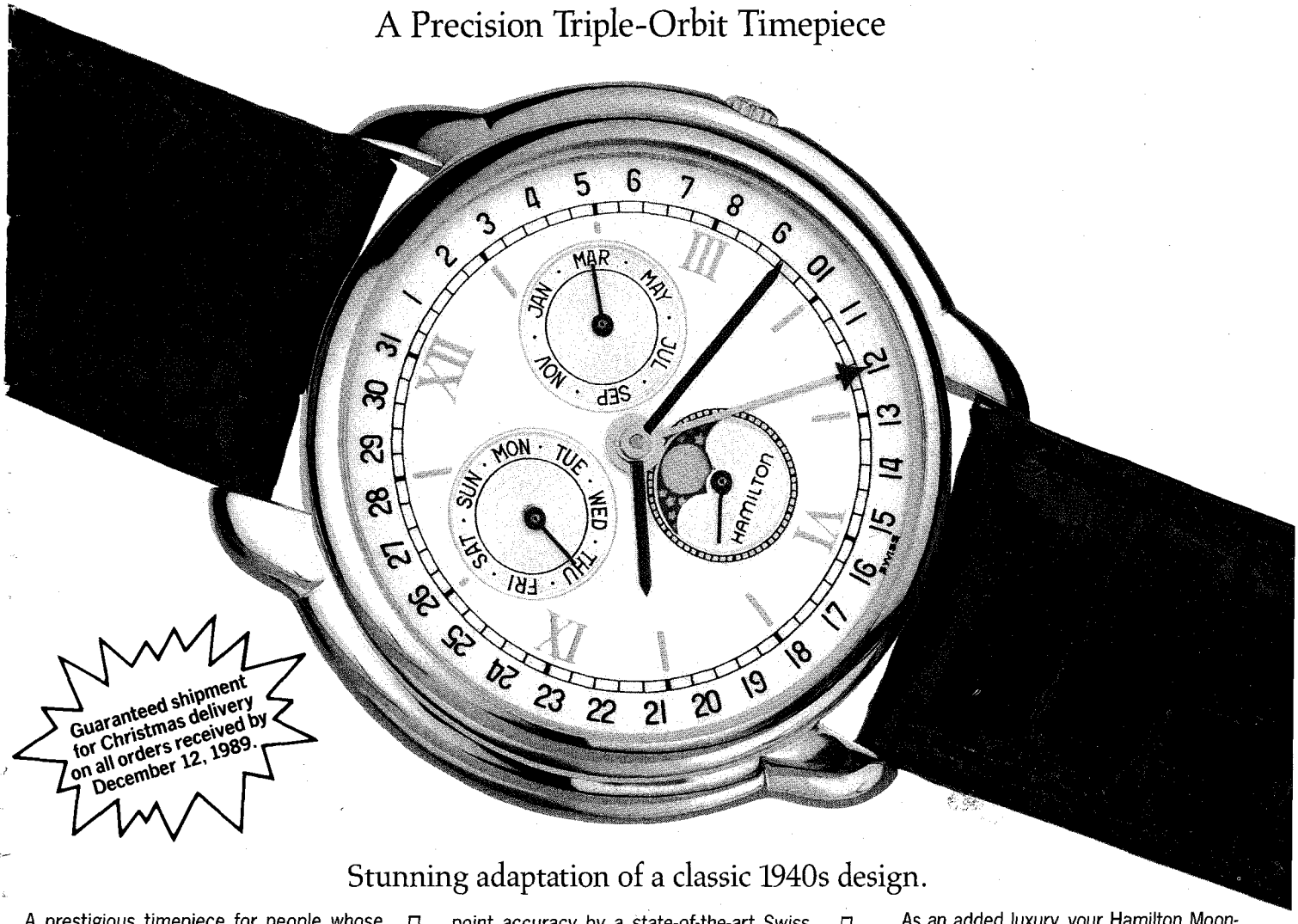

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upon NRCC chairman Guy Vander Jagt to make some changes. The subsequent appointment of Ed Rollins as co-chairman was viewed by professionals in both parties as a sign that the stakes had just been raised and that the House would again become a top priority for the Republicans. Mr. Rollins, with two decades of political experience, including managing Ronald Reagan's 1984 campaign and acting as White House political director, is almost universally viewed by campaign operatives in both parties as a pro's pro.

Mr. Allison's suggestion that the NRCC pinpoint winnable districts for 1990 and recruit premium candidates has been standard operating procedure for all four of the campaign committees for many years, making me wonder just how familiar Mr. Allison is with the operations of these committees.

Finally, much like an ill-prepared House challenger, Mr. Allison does some flip-flopping of his own in the article. First, he says that Republicans have mistakenly tried in the past to make congressional elections into national referenda, noting the old Tip O'Neill adage that all politics is local politics. Later, however, he suggests that "campaigns are battles of ideas." I would suggest that anyone who would describe campaigns as "battles of ideas" has spent very little time around the headquarters of winning campaigns.

I personally don't care who prevails in next year's congressional elections; my job is simply to analyze them. It does distress me, however, to see what amounts to an ill-informed, cheap shot aimed at a very talented group of people facing an uphill fight.

Charles E. Cook Jr.
Editor, The Cook Political Report
Vice President, Hill and Knowlton
Washington, D.C.

While I greatly appreciated the vote of confidence Wick Allison gave me in his recent article on the Republican strategy to take over the House of Representatives, I must disagree with him on one major point.

Mr. Allison seems to believe that the National Republican Congressional Committee, under Chairman Guy Vander Jagt and Co-Chairman Ed Rollins, is insufficient to the task of electing Republicans. I disagree.

I've worked with, for, and against the new NRCC leadership team. Guy Vander Jagt deserves praise, not criticism, for having put them in place.

Lee Atwater
Chairman
Republican National Committee
Washington, D.C.

Mr. Thomas will go far in Washington, for he obviously possesses a generous and forgiving nature. When he was struggling to win his special election, however, he was less enthusiastic about the NRCC. Referred to by the Casper Star-Tribune *as the "national GOP bozos," the NRCC and its hamhandedness became an issue in Wyoming and almost lost Mr. Thomas his seat. Talking to T. R. Reid of the* Washington Post *just days before the election, Mr. Thomas said, "I think we'll win it, but I'll tell you this, it won't be because of any 'help' we got from Washington."*

Mr. Cook's foray into political apologetics is a little more curious, because he admits he doesn't care who wins the House. He mentions this after he's gone to great lengths to give us reasons why Republicans continually lose it. Having told us why no problem really exists, he then ("candidly speaking") tells us a solution has been put in place for the problem (which he says never existed).

But there is a problem, and judging by the NRCC's performance in the 1989 special elections it still exists. House Republicans have lost seats in every general election since 1980, during the greatest surge of support for the party in history, and spent $200 million of Republican donors' money doing it. (Mr. Cook could add something of actual value to the debate if he could tell us where all that money went.) I said in my article that Republican excuses have run out. Obviously the Washington excuse mill runs at a faster pace than even I anticipated.

Winners don't need excuses. The losers' mentality that afflicts Republican ranks is not likely to be reversed by the man responsible for their dismal performance. Guy Vander Jagt has not been held accountable for his losses; he has, in fact, been rewarded for failure. His re-election as NRCC chairman shows most Republicans are comfortable in their minority. If that isn't changed, the real losers will be the American people.

The 1992 elections represent a historic opportunity—on that, everyone agrees. Republicans can capture the House and take the Reagan revolution to a new and more conclusive stage. It will require fire in the belly and vigorous, spirited leadership. That leadership cannot come from hired guns, no matter how sharp

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their aim. It must come from Republican members of the House. Guy Vander Jagt should step down, and a new chairman should be elected who can unify his colleagues and lead them to victory.

Mr. Atwater says he doesn't agree with me on that point. I'm glad to have him involved in the debate because it indicates he will be involved in the battle for the House. That would be a major plus. Of all Mr. Atwater's many qualities, the one I like the best is this: He knows how to win elections. —*WA*

Charlie Had No Choppers

Oh my! In his review of *Casualties of War* [Sept. 29], John Simon criticizes the movie because, among other things, "some military details are wrong," using as evidence that "none of [the infantrymen] gets hit even as an American gunboat coming down the river is blown to bits by VC copters." The Vietcong had no helicopters (generally referred to as "choppers," by the way); those were American aircraft that accidentally shot up their own men. I don't blame Simon for lacking military expertise, but surely he knows that the irony of Americans being killed by friendly fire is a *sine qua non* for all Vietnam War movies.

Michael Fumento
Champaign, Ill.

Doesn't Look like Kansas

Wisconsin is one of the greatest states in the Union, but it does have some problems: 1) the winters are long and cold, 2) the Green Bay Packers can't win, and 3) David Obey represents the 7th District in Congress. While many in Wisconsin are not happy with these events, we accept them. Hence it bothered me to see you accuse Kansas of sending David Obey to the House ["For the Record," Sept. 15].

Dan Olszewski
Withee, Wis.

Straussians and Paleos

Peter Stanlis ["The Open Question," Oct. 27] insists that my essay was so abstract as to signify nothing, yet was somehow concrete enough to be wrong about everything. His reply is a long sputter of indignation that misses the point of my analysis. I do not condemn the South, Southerners, tradition, order, freedom, or individual initiative. On the contrary, these are all good things, but their goodness is not intrinsic (traditions can be bad, order dehumanizing, freedom misused, etc.). Rather, it stems from their participation in a permanent moral order defined by "the laws of nature and of nature's God." Men have equal rights under the natural law because they are "created equal," i.e., equally human. But it is precisely this reasonable equality of rights that paleoconservatives find both hard to swallow and impossible to spit out. Hence their sputtering.

It is true that some Straussians (and some neoconservatives) see the establishment of religious freedom in America as a rejection of Biblical religion, and therefore conceive of America as essentially secularist and materialist. But this is not my view, nor the position of the Western Straussians. On the Founders' understanding of the importance of religion for human happiness, I agree with Stanlis and other traditional conservatives. But precisely on those grounds, it is their own—American—tradition of civil and religious liberty, based on human equality, that they ought to be conserving.

Charles R. Kesler
Claremont, Calif.

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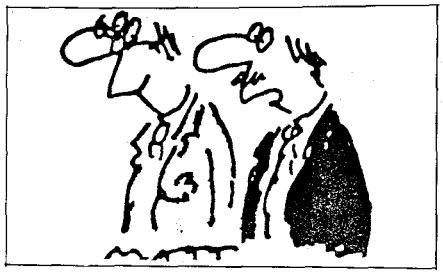
ON THE RECORD

■ Hard knocks for the legal-beagle Left: A district judge found a suit filed by former Attorney General **Ramsey Clark** against **Ronald Reagan** and **Margaret Thatcher** on behalf of 55 Libyans to be "frivolous." Now District of Columbia federal appeals court (Justices **Buckley**, **Ginsburg**, and **Sentelle**) has ordered the judge to go one step further and fine Clark. The appeals court also ordered Clark to pay the fees for the lawyers who defended Mrs. Thatcher against complicity for damages allegedly suffered in the Tripoli raid. . . . In North Carolina, a federal judge has levied a $10,000 fine against **William Kunstler** and two other attorneys for filing a "frivolous suit" in the Christic Institute case against Gen. **John Singlaub** and others. Most of the Christic evidence, said the judge, was "self-serving and largely based on hearsay and speculation." . . . In Washington, Sens. **Christopher Dodd** (D., Conn.) and **John Kerry** (D., Mass.)—the darlings of the Left—have fallen in bad graces of CISPES (Committee for Solidarity with the People of El Salvador). Their sin: they voted aid to El Salvador even though President **Cristiani**, who won the last election, is a right-winger. "People like John Kerry and Christopher Dodd," says CISPES organizer **Diane Greene**, "are proving themselves to be death-squad Democrats." In the pro-Salvador-aid vote, says another CISPES leader, **John Hanna**, Dodd "got into bed with fascists." CISPES was formed in 1980 by the Salvadoran guerrilla FMLN (Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front), the CPUSA, and the Cuban Mission to the UN. . . . Other Left items: The Better World Society (**Ted Turner**, co-founder) has awarded **Mikhail Gorbachev** its peace prize, presentation by Pepsico head **Donald Kendall**. . . . The radical *Guardian* reports that fifty thousand women joined National Organization for Women (NOW) in fortnight following Supreme Court's *Webster* abortion decision.



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"Of course, now we've put a value on the environment we can start selling it."

■ *U.S. News* says President **Bush** thinks the Republicans might just win the Senate in 1990. Among vulnerable Democrats is Rhode Island's Sen. **Claiborne Pell** (ACU 0), who took such a bashing over his handling of Senate Foreign Relations Committee, of which he is chairman, in front-page blast in *Washington Post* a week ago that it is said he may not run again. Another reason to back out: the strength and popularity of his probable opponent, Rep. **Claudine Schneider** (R.), who is not, incidentally, all that far to Pell's right. . . . **Carl Levin** (ACU 0) is also weak in the odds, but a developing primary fight among Michigan conservatives might work to his advantage. Republican Rep. **Bill Schuette** has inside track, but longtime Michigan conservative leader **W. Clark Durant** has backing of Michigan Young Republicans and a number of party leaders. . . . Montana's **Max Baucus** (ACU 8) would have more to worry about if Montana Republicans could find suitable candidate to run against him. First three they considered have backed down. . . . Sen. **Paul Simon** (ACU 0) was expected to have a hard time, but recent polls show him running comfortably ahead of Rep. **Lynn Martin**, first Illinois GOPer to enter race. . . . Most vulnerable Republican seats, according to *Congressional Quarterly*, are in Kentucky (Sen. **Mitch McConnell**); Indiana, where **Daniel Coats** was named to **Dan Quayle**'s seat; and Oregon, if Sen. **Mark Hatfield** decides not to run again. . . . Back in Massachusetts, where speculation is high on whether **Barney Frank** is through, *Boston Globe* says at least three Kennedys might be interested: graduate student **Edward Kennedy**, **Teddy**'s son, and either **Kerry** or **Michael**, both offspring of **Bobby**'s. Boston Conservatives Society nailed Barney Frank for his December 1987 remarks about **Ed Meese**. Meese should resign, said Frank, because he had been "extraordinarily careless in his associations."

■ Guess who's coming to dinner? Sweden—socialism's showcase state—has decided to try supply-side economics. Finance Minister **Kjell-Olof Feldt** has introduced tax package in parliament that will reduce the top marginal income-tax rate from 72 to 50 per cent and consolidate the present 21 income-tax brackets to two by 1991. . . . Reports that Soviet Union will cut off military aid to Nicaragua between now and the February elections, taken with grain of salt. Soviets say they can't, of course, control continued arms shipments to Nicaragua from Cuba and East Germany. As for other aid, it's estimated that USSR's $465-million aid package to Managua this year amounts to $133 for every Nicaraguan citizen. . . . While Nicaragua's powerful Channel 6 TV station gave gavel-to-gavel coverage to Sandinista convention that nominated **Daniel Ortega** its presidential candidate, the opposition is given ten minutes twice a week on Channel 2, whose signal is so weak, says *Miami Herald*, that it cannot be heard in all of Managua. Comments **Mario Gonzales**, head of an OAS (Organization of American States) team monitoring the election process: "If this is prolonged until February 25 it will gravely affect the [electoral] process."

■ Getting a rave review in the Soviet journal *Nedelya* is a revisionist book *Not to Be Published*, by Soviet historian-fantasist **V. Savelev**. Savelev claims **Winston Churchill** was a German spy from 1899 on, and that he was a lifelong admirer of **Adolf Hitler**. Deep cover indeed.

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FROM THE EDITOR

Round Up the Usual Brokers

I SEE THAT my old friend Michael Keinsley has recently been supporting the Racketeering-Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act as a legitimate tool against all sorts of crime, not merely crime committed by racketeering-influenced and corrupt organizations. Michael's reasoning is, as always, ingenious. I particularly liked his point that RICO's provision allowing prosecutors to impound an organization's assets before trial was justified in order to "prevent the assets slipping away and making the trial pointless." But would Drexel Burnham Lambert really have moved all its assets to the Cayman Islands and managed the junk-bond business from there if RICO had not been threatened against it? It seems unlikely to me. And since threatening RICO is equivalent to threatening bankruptcy, wasn't that threat, employed without due cause, a legal version of the protection racket, forcing Drexel to surrender whether guilty or not?

At this point in the argument liberals accuse conservatives of inconsistency and hypocrisy. How come you're raising these legalistic quibbles about the rights of the accused, goes the refrain, when you invariably attack the exclusionary rule? Isn't white-collar crime every bit as bad as street crime? To which the answers are: a) abolishing the exclusionary rule would not damage a fair trial, which RICO does, and b) no, as a matter of fact, white-collar crime is not nearly as bad as street crime because it doesn't wound, maim, and kill people.

Why do liberals demand stern measures against white-collar crime while defending the rights of most other sorts of accused? After all, a white-collar criminal is best defined as someone who is *not* a habitual criminal and *not* a violent criminal either. Yet this mild, unassuming villain seems to arouse a special passion for retribution and harshness among the liberal chattering classes. *Time* magazine, for instance, last year denounced white-collar crime on Wall Street, in particular insider trading, as an "epidemic of cheating" which "culminates a roaring, greedy decade that created . . . boundless motivation for cheating." It was also "lurid," "ghoulish," "remorseless," and—here, finally comes the point—"partly inspired by the deregulatory, anything-goes mood of the Reagan era."

But be of good cheer. *Time* told us that "law-enforcement agencies are conducting the clean-up with a newfound toughness." And Congress duly passed a stricter law on insider trading. In other words, the campaign against insider trading has all the hallmarks of a liberal witch-hunt.

Ordinary people, however, have been quietly resistant to this hysteria, perhaps because they couldn't quite understand what it was all about. In a 1986 opinion poll, respondents were asked whether insider trading should be illegal. A worthy majority of 66 per cent to 26 per cent said stoutly that it should. The second question then told them what insider trading was:

"Suppose that someone got a tip that the company he or she works for was going to be purchased for a lot more money than its current stock price. Do you think that most people, if they had the money, would buy stock in that company or not?"

Now they were better informed, only 15 per cent thought that most people would refrain from insider trading. Sixty-eight per cent backed Original Sin. There was a slight increase in virtue (or in hypocrisy) when this question was changed to "would *you* buy stock in the company?" Fifty-two per cent said yes and 39 per cent resisted temptation.

Finally, this second, virtuous group was asked their reasons for not buying a sure thing. A sober, upstanding 35 per cent said it would be "just plain wrong." Three per cent feared detection. Twenty-two per cent pleaded that it would be illegal. But 34 per cent—almost as many as the honest respondents—pointed out cannily that *the tip might be wrong*.

There is little evidence here of strong public indignation about "crime on Wall Street." What the public finds ghoulish, lurid, and remorseless is the epidemic of crime in other streets. This represents a sensible order of priorities. In Dr. Madsen Pirie's rhetorical question: "When was the last time you were afraid to go out at night in case you were embezzled?" And don't tell me, Michael, that fear of embezzlement is the cause of America's low savings rate.

■ We have become familiar in recent years with perverse legal judgments: for instance, the man who throws himself under a subway train, survives, and then sues the transport authority because the driver put on the brakes too slowly. A fascinating article in *Forbes* by Peter Brimelow and Leslie Spencer points out that these are not mere miscarriages of justice. They are a combination of greed and, er, political liberalism.

Judges in recent years have taken to making large awards against defendants who have done no wrong, often to plaintiffs who have themselves been negligent, simply on the grounds that the plaintiffs (usually corporations) could afford it. Trial lawyers, seeing the chance of hefty contingency fees, have rushed to judgment. The results are an explosion of multi-million-dollar awards, the occasional bankrupt corporation, higher insurance premiums, and millionaire lawyers who spout social justice—and worse. Thus Mr. Herb Hafif (1988 income, according to *Forbes*, $40 million) declares: "I think it's a bitter shame about this society. The Russians have a more responsive political system than we do."

This nonsense has, of course, been made much easier by public-interest "consumer advocates," like Ralph Nader and his "raiders," pushing extreme views of a manufacturer's product liability. Mr. Nader has always denied accepting funds from trial lawyers since that would be a plain conflict of interest. *Forbes*, however, quotes several trial lawyers saying they donate money to him. There's a contingency fee in this for someone. Unless, of course, there's honor among lawyers. —JOHN O'SULLIVAN

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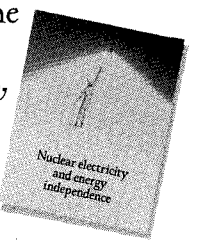

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THE WEEK

■ Mommy, when is Reagan coming back?

■ It can't be! And yet it is! For the first time in recorded history, the House has voted to repeal an entitlement program—namely, last year's Medicare Catastrophic Coverage Act. The program ran into a buzzsaw when its intended beneficiaries realized they'd have to pay for it themselves, through a special surtax. Congress got the word, and the vote wasn't even close: 269 to 156. Even without the late Claude Pepper to lead it, the old-people's lobby is still one of the most potent in Washington.

■ In the three years since the government sold off Conrail, the company has boomed. Shares originally selling at $28 are now selling for $42 (post–October 13), and Conrail can expect excess cash flow of $130 million this year—after spending $600 million on capital improvements. Of course, there are dangers to privatization: the directors are busy raising dividends and deploying poison pills. Amtrak, anyone?

■ The Reverend Ralph Abernathy's autobiography, *And the Walls Came Tumbling Down*, recalls that Martin Luther King Jr. spent his last night on earth bed-hopping between two female admirers, then slapped another woman around in a fight over why he hadn't been with *her*. None of the three ladies is to be confused with Coretta Scott King. Abernathy's fellow civil-rights leaders, dismayed, have demanded that he "repudiate" his account, some charging he didn't write it, some charging he wrote it for money, some charging it never happened, some charging . . . well, let's just say he hit a raw nerve. King's birthday became a national holiday thanks to a good deal of high-pressure mythologizing. Now the facts that were inadmissible at the time are forcing their way into public awareness.

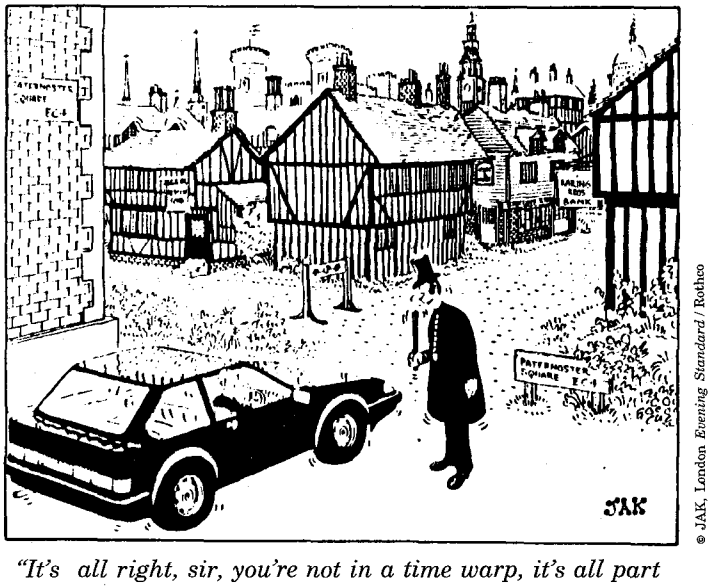
■ What the heck. We've already rolled Lincoln's and Washington's birthdays into one date. Why not combine King's birthday with Valentine's Day?

■ Columnist Michael Kinsley has weighed in with a call for a healthy dash of "class warfare." After all, he says, the Republicans have already started it. They are "redistributing the wealth—upward." I.e., "giving to the rich." I.e., letting people who make more than, say, Michael Kinsley keep a larger fraction of their own money. He's taking the proposed capital-gains-tax reduction very hard, poor fellow. The *idea* that Donald *Trump* may be getting even *richer*—well, let's not even *think* about it.

■ After comedian Jackie Mason was forced to leave the Giuliani mayoral campaign because of the flap over his remarks on blacks and Jews, Woody Allen, who backs Giuliani's opponent, David Dinkins, had a suggestion: "Everybody should lighten up a little." Mason's humor, he said, is "racial—but not racist." So far, Allen has managed to elude the Tolerance Police.

■ Replacing Chicago-style politics in El Salvador is (University of) Chicago-style economics. New President Alfredo Cristiani has brought four prominent free-marketeers into his cabinet, including the Central-bank president and head of rural development—thus upsetting both the socialist Left and the feudal Right, whose warring had previously kept the economy down. New policies include cuts in government spending, trade barriers, and, down the line, agrarian reform and bank privatization. The revolutionary change was made possible by U.S. foreign aid, which went toward establishing the Salvadoran Foundation for Social and Economic Development (Fusades), a think-tank which two years ago threw up its hands at then-President Duarte's collective farms and central planning and brought in Chicago economist Arnold Harberger and some of the Chileans who created Latin America's only sound economy. Foreign aid that makes a *positive* difference? How on earth did that happen?

■ "The on-going developments in Poland," writes the Vietnamese Communist Party daily *Nhan Dan*,



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"It's all right, sir, you're not in a time warp, it's all part of Prince Charles's vision of the city!"

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"are essentially a counter-revolutionary coup d'état." A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.

■ Like so much that comes out of the Bush Administration, the undergraduate core curriculum recently proposed by the National Endowment for the Humanities is nothing to set your heart pounding. Along with two years of a foreign language and three one-year courses in the pure, natural, and social sciences, the NEH core would require four one-semester courses in Western civilization—plus, as a sop to Third World enthusiasts, two semesters of non-Western civilization. That's better than nothing: 98 per cent of American colleges have no core at all. Still, when negotiating with an enemy (which is what, essentially, the education establishment has become), it should be a rule of thumb to ask for more than you expect in the end to get. Better to have proposed a model on the order of the more rigorous, fifty-year-old cores in place at Columbia and the University of Chicago. For its trouble, though, two cheers for the NEH.

■ The relation between popular culture and popular reality is a tricky one, but it's fair to say that *Ozzie and Harriet*, *The Honeymooners*, and even *Maverick* somehow reflected public perceptions in the Fifties, as *All in the Family* did in the early Seventies. What an ill omen for the Nineties, then, that several network TV series premiering this season take place in Washington, D.C., each focusing on the power and glamor of the capital. And for good reason: the Federal Government continues to grow in size, and thus in real importance, for better or (usually) worse, in our daily lives. We continue to hope that Ronald Reagan made a real difference and that the networks have just missed the trend—but if *Top of the Hill*, *Capital News* (Lou Grant at the *Washington Post*, a mid-season replacement), *Mancuso, FBI* (based on last year's odious *Favorite Son*), or *Snoops* succeeds, there'll be more reminders of how far we have to go.

■ Her attorney said that a "delusional" California woman really believed that she was high priestess of the Church of the Most High Goddess, which was modeled on a supposed ancient Egyptian church in which the male worshippers were to perform sex acts with female priests, which explains why she performed two thousand, um, religious rites with her worshippers. An interesting defense, even in California, against three misdemeanor charges that she ran a house of prostitution.

■ The Postal Service *tried* to issue a brontosaurus stamp, as one in a set of four dinosaur stamps, annoying what is termed the paleontological lobby, mainly kids too young to vote, all of whom know the beast is really an apatosaurus. Just shut up and be glad it's still a 25-cent stamp.

■ Scientists have figured out how to make diamonds out of sewer gas, and yet upwards of a trillion dollars in federal spending does not solve all our problems. What are we doing wrong?

Congress Caused the Crash

PRESS PUNDITS quickly seized on three nonsensical explanations of why the stock market suddenly went into a freefall around 2:30 in the afternoon of October 13. Some said it was a spurt in producer prices. But that news came out early in the morning, and interest rates nonetheless *fell*. Others said it was "program trading." But even the silliest forms of program trading (which almost amount to "buy high and sell low") involve selling stock *after* the market tumbles, so that can scarcely begin the process. Still others blamed the crash on news of failure to get financing for a takeover of United Airlines. Even if a setback in a single takeover deal could really collapse all other "deal stocks," that couldn't explain why stocks fell for nearly *all* companies, big and small. If nearly all companies were really takeover candidates, who would be left with enough money to take them over?

The actual reason investors ran scared is obvious enough. The market started to drop like a stone just after wire services reported that Senate Republicans had agreed to remove the proposed cut in the capital-gains tax from the budget-reconciliation bill. Individual investors who had recently bought stocks in hopes of a 20 per cent tax on any future gains suddenly learned they might have to pay 33 per cent instead. This prospect would in turn force new austerity on consumers. The combined prospect of scaring investors out of the market, and scaring consumers out of purchasing durable goods and housing, was enough to cause foreign investors and pension funds to run for cover also.

The press evaded this obvious explanation with artful dexterity. It was simply too embarrassing to opinionated reporters who had long been arguing ("reporting") that a lower capital-gains tax would simply be a useless gift to fatcats. A typical example is Al Hunt, who leads a group of missionaries on behalf of high capital-gains taxes in the *Wall Street Journal*'s Washington bureau. Hunt, who has been taking up the left flank on TV talk shows, actually told the *Capitol Gang* that the crash couldn't possibly have been due to bad news on capital gains, since neither his paper nor the *Washington Post* nor

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the *New York Times* had made that connection. The NBC Friday evening news at least showed Senator Bentsen saying, "Senate Republicans have stated they will not propose a cut in capital gains in the reconciliation bill." But Tom Brokaw felt obliged to editorialize that this "had nothing to do with the stock market." Sure, Tom. Why should investors care how much tax they pay? After all, Al Hunt doesn't care.

Taking capital-gains-tax relief out of the reconciliation bill didn't kill the idea, but it certainly wounded it. Separating the tax cut from the budget reduces its revenue-raising appeal, while risking a filibuster on the floor. If the White House doesn't take the offensive with a public campaign for a lower capital-gains tax, the crash on Friday the 13th won't be simply temporary bad luck.

General Noriega's Retirement

THERE WERE reasons for not demonizing Noriega to the extent the Bush Administration did, pre-coup. His unpopularity here is largely an artifact of our "war" on drugs, which, as the coup redundantly demonstrated, is a war we are not willing to prosecute—i.e., a phony war. Yes, Noriega is an ugly thug. Are we, on that account, prepared to topple half the governments in the Third World?

Still, the fact remains that Bush had elaborately denounced Noriega, going so far as to say that we would "love" to see the Panamanian military remove him. When some Panamanian units took us up on it, we balked. The scapegoats of the moment are William Webster and the CIA, as if information were the problem. But the White House had as much information as it ever has, i.e., not enough. Every action is a forced march through fog. We did not march because we were not *mentally* prepared to do so. Who willed the ends would not will the means.

Noriega Forever

King Henry's henchmen murdered Becket;
Richard killed the princely tots;
The Tudors used the Tower, mainly,
When suppressing palace plots;
But Mr. Bush, like Woodrow Wilson,
Wants the world to be his pal,
And may not move till Noriega
Drains the Panama Canal.

W. H. VON DREELE

In the short run, Noriega can be expected to swing even further to the left. He was already pretty far out there, having alienated Panama's middle and business classes. Eastern Europe may be in upheaval, but in the Third World, to be identified with the Left is still a source of strength.

One certainty: the next coup attempt, if there is a next one, will be the General's last. No Panamanian is going to repeat the mistake of mercy.

Another Chance for Afghanistan

THE AFGHAN *mujahedin* have always gotten bad press. When the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in 1979 the *mujahedin* were widely portrayed as the reactionary enemies of progress; the Soviet Union was "bombing them into the twentieth century." It was news when the *mujahedin* got carried away and skinned captured Russians, but thousands of Afghans systematically tortured and killed by the Soviets and their Afghan puppets received scant attention. The *mujahedin*'s traditional Moslem attitudes toward women counted against them; open racism in the Soviet army—both in Afghanistan and at home—is rarely mentioned. The *mujahedin*'s zeal in defense of their faith is proof of fanaticism; Communist indoctrination, at least according to UNESCO, is a form of modernization. Today we see only the victims of guerrilla shelling of Kabul on our television screens, as if the Communists shelled villages under guerrilla control with Christmas puddings.

The latest line is this: The *mujahedin* may have been right for as long as they were fighting the Red Army, but now that the Soviets have gone they are surely wrong to continue. Never mind that it is those who never supported the *mujahedin*, even when they were fighting the Soviets, who argue thus. They are in any case factually incorrect. The war in Afghanistan did not start with the Soviet invasion in December 1979 but at least as early as March of that year, when the populace of Herat, Afghanistan's third biggest city, rose up in revolt against the rule of terror imposed after the April 1978 Communist coup. The insurrection was drowned in the blood of twenty thousand people. In all, Afghan Communists exterminated between fifty and one hundred thousand of their own countrymen even *before* the Soviet invasion. The man who was largely responsible for this slaughter was the then leader of KhAD (the Afghan clone of the KGB) and today's pious Muslim president of Afghanistan, "Dr." (actually Major General) Najibullah. Only in this context can we understand the refusal of the Afghan resistance to negotiate with his regime.

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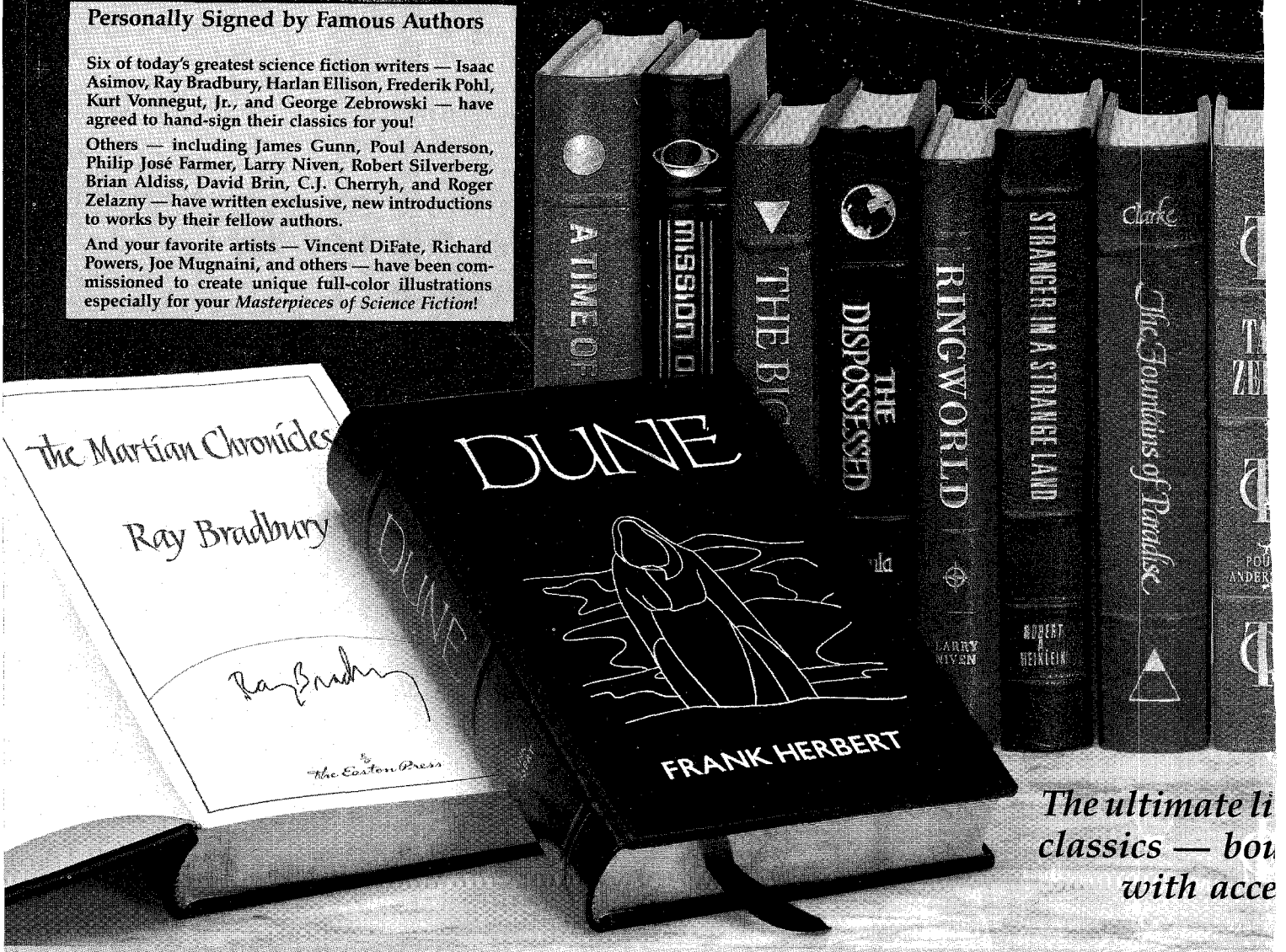

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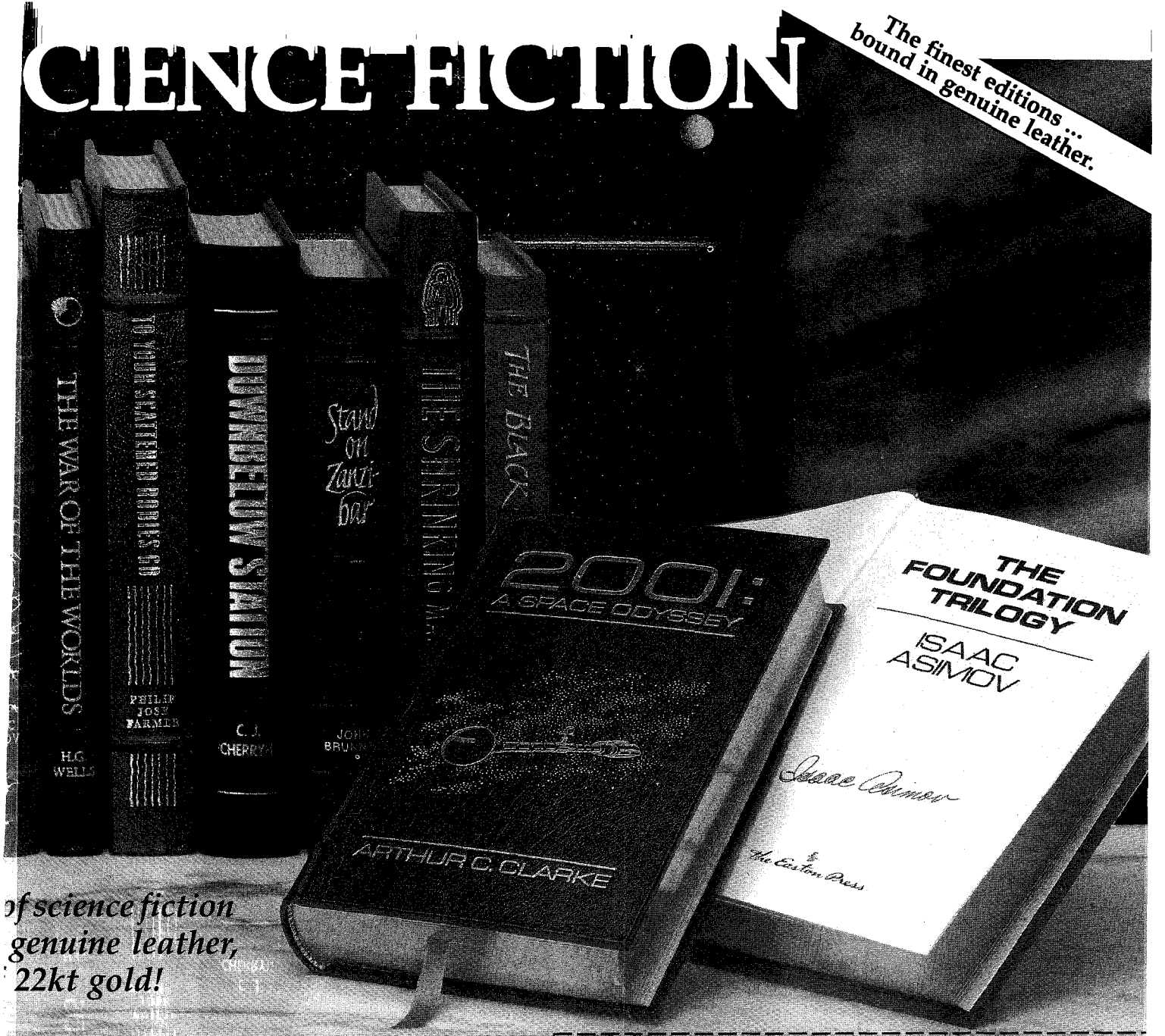

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It is partly thanks to the U.S. and Pakistan that Najibullah is still in power. It is they who have for years supported Gulbadin Hekmatyar—the evil spirit of the Afghan resistance; it is they who pushed the *mujahedin* into the disastrous assault on Jalalabad; it is they who created wildly unrealistic expectations of the speed of a guerrilla victory. Nevertheless, the long-term outlook still favors the *mujahedin*. Only last week the Soviets delivered two thousand truckloads of supplies to Kabul, and up to forty flights land there every day at a cost of about $300 million per month. How long can the Soviets keep this up?

Senator Pell's proposal of a simultaneous scaling down of assistance from the Soviet Union and the United States to their Afghan allies is sensible but not new. As early as the March 1988 Geneva negotiations on Afghanistan, which resulted in setting the timetable for the Soviet withdrawal, the U.S. proposed a multilateral disengagement. In diplomatic jargon it was called "negative symmetry," but the Soviets would not stop backing their client, so "positive symmetry" was tacitly agreed upon instead, and each side stepped up supplies. If the Soviets now agree on "negative symmetry" it is only thanks to a firm American stand. As Radek Sikorski argued in *NR* ["Afghan Sitzkrieg," April 21], if they do accept verifiable "negative symmetry," we should agree. It will benefit the guerrillas. It is the Communist government that needs hardware so badly. The guerrillas' best weapon is the support of most of their countrymen.

Deutschland, Deutschland, Over There

As the crowds that were fleeing via Budapest and Prague now appear on the streets of Leipzig and Dresden, one of the ironies of the East German situation has gone unremarked.

For forty years, the guilts of World War II have been borne by West Germany alone. A free state and the ally of free states, West Germany has investigated its past, punished Nazi collaborators, given money to Israel, and so forth, and so on.

East Germany has been above all that. Communism, it believed, was enough to inoculate it against the taints of the past. Consequently, it embraced the symbols of German nationalism without embarrassment, celebrating Bach and Luther anniversaries, and erecting Bismarck monuments.

Now that those of their subjects who have not fled seem to be demonstrating for reform, has it occurred to any of the gerontocrats that they themselves are somehow responsible? If it's OK to be a German, and if there is another Germany where life is palpably better, why not go there? Or why not change the Germany you're in?

Hoist on their own doctrinaire petard. It couldn't happen to a nicer bunch of folks.

New York's Mayoralty

It isn't going well, which means,
Though Mr. Bush beat tambourines
And raised some bucks,
The Giuliani ticket looks
Like kitchens with too many cooks,
Each in a tux.

W. H. VON DREELE

Abortion: Republicans on the Run

No doubt about it, the pro-abortion forces have seized the center of the ring, bucked up by a cheering crowd of journalists. The House has voted to fund abortion in the case of rape or incest; the Florida legislature, called into special session by Governor Bob Martinez, rejected every anti-abortion measure put before it.

Alarmed, anti-abortion politicians have started waffling all over the place. Jim Courter, running for governor of New Jersey, has already crippled his own campaign by backing off his formerly staunch position. Rudolph Giuliani, the doomed Republican mayoral candidate in New York, has flip-flopped clumsily. In Virginia, the Democratic candidate for governor, Douglas Wilder, is featuring his pro-abortion stance as a selling point—and winning, thanks to an anti-abortion opponent, Marshall Coleman, who keeps trying to change the subject.

None of these items, taken separately, is very substantial. Collectively, though, they have force, permitting the media to extrapolate what *Time* gloatingly calls "a pro-choice majority."

The Republicans are afraid to fight on this issue; the Democrats are not. But the Democrats may be making the classic mistake of confusing media enthusiasm with a groundswell. Though opinion is volatile, most polls have been reporting that two-thirds of all Americans favor legal abortion only in such hard cases as rape, incest, and life-threatening pregnancy. Moreover, pro-lifers are bound to be much more passionate than most of their opponents, since they regard abortion as a life-or-death issue.

But if the issue does remain a winner for the Republicans, which is yet to be seen, it won't be because they've earned it.

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Good News from Chile

CENTRAL AND South American news these days tends to be calamitous: murderous drug wars in Colombia, Shining Path killers in Peru, bombings and guerrilla raids in El Salvador, failed coup and executions in Panama, economic collapse and repression in Nicaragua, Castro still flying high in Cuba.

For stability, economic growth, prosperity, and relative peace one now looks to Chile, so long the whipping boy of the intellectual Left. In the October issue of *Crisis*, the conservative Catholic lay magazine, Mark Falcoff of the American Enterprise Institute reviews the remarkable story of Chile, where an authoritarian regime is now giving way to democracy. A year ago, Chile held an up-or-down referendum: Did the people want another eight years of Pinochet, or not? Not, said the people, 44 to 56 per cent. The next vote comes in December, when Patricio Alwyn, president of the Christian Democratic Party and candidate of the opposition center-to-left parties, is expected to win the presidency against Pinochet's candidate, former Economic Minister Hernán Buchi, a Chicago-school economist whose free-enterprise, free-market policies are credited with Chile's economic recovery and current prosperity.

Many problems lie ahead, even should Alwyn win a clear majority. What happens to Pinochet, for instance, who, under the present charter, will continue as commander-in-chief of the armed forces for another eight years? Will the opposition coalition continue the policies that have made Chile one of the few prosperous economies in Latin America? Will the military—which has ruled Chile for 15 years—be content to return to the barracks and abandon the halls of power? But Chile's future looks bright, in substantial part because of Pinochet's policies, a fact that will, we predict, go underreported by the Keepers of World Opinion.

Sensitivity Fascism

THIS IS a development to monitor closely. Colleges and universities across the country are passing regulations that prohibit "offensive" language or behavior relative to race, gender, or, as they say nowadays, "sexual orientation."

The first example of this sort of thing to come to our attention was the famous Wayne Dick case at Yale a couple of years ago. Dick had naively put up posters satirizing Yale's GLAD week: Gay/Lesbian Awareness Days, during which the deviants and their supporters celebrate deviance. Wayne Dick was hauled before the college authorities and sentenced to draconian punishment, though the verdict was overturned by Yale's incoming president, Benno Schmidt, who probably did not like the idea of a monster lawsuit in his first year.

But the spirit of censorship is abroad in academia. President Donna Shalala of Wisconsin persuaded the legislature there to pass particularly stringent rules, which are bound to be challenged in court. The rules at Michigan have already been overturned by a federal judge as violating the First Amendment in their scope and vagueness. Wellesley College is in a spasm over an official report that says "racism" on that campus is pervasive but invisible.

Could Jackie Mason be invited to such a campus? Or even Woody Allen?

At the recent Yale–Dartmouth football game in Hanover, New Hampshire, a banner advocating restoration of the traditional Dartmouth Indian symbol was seized by the police on the orders of the college proctor, who deemed it "offensive."

What is looming is an ironic confrontation between the academic fascists and their cousins, the First Amendment absolutists. If a lawsuit along these lines ever makes it to the Supreme Court—which it surely will—sit back and enjoy the fun.

Drugs: A Middle Course?

THE NATION'S drug problem makes a mockery of George Bush's inaugural pledge that "This scourge will stop!" It isn't stopping. It isn't slowing. An estimated five thousand new crack users—instant addicts—are initiated every day.

To modify one of the redoubtable James Burnham's laws slightly, if there's no solution, there's no problem. For the individual and perhaps the neighborhood, there are solutions. The nation is a different story. Jerome Skolnick, a law professor at Berkeley, notes that only 1 per cent of the street price of crack goes to pay the cost of smuggling; if you triple the interdiction rate, it is still only an insignificant 3 per cent of the price.

Nobody calls drug use a "victimless crime" any more. It is the task of those who call for decriminalization to assure us that there is a fair certainty that the fall in collateral crime will more than offset the inevitable increase in consumption. We should not overlook the possibility that the present situation, unsatisfying though it is, may be the optimum.

But it's time to think seriously of alternative arrangements: perhaps not full legalization, but licensed consumption for present users, at low

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prices, through government-controlled outlets. Illicit use could be punished harshly; licit use would be stigmatized. For pushers, profits would fall while risks increased. The illegal trade would presumably wither. Children susceptible to being drawn into the drug-consuming population could be cut off from it.

This assumes that drug use is already near its natural ceiling. If the assumption is wrong, the results would be tragic; if correct, the problem might be ameliorated.

This approach is nothing to rush into, but it's worth considering, and maybe adopting in local experiments. It might prove the best way of exploiting both market dynamics and moral norms.

Peggy Noonan Grosses Out

MANY FORMER presidential speechwriters are dismayed by the self-serving publicity hunger of Reagan speechwriter Peggy Noonan, whose *What I Saw at the Revolution* will be published in January. A speechwriter is supposed to have a passion for anonymity. This is an important part of the ethics of the post, fully understood by all—or almost all. To be sure, even while functioning as a White House writer, Miss Noonan gave us fair warning, always letting it be known what speeches she had written.

A small portion of her book has now been published in the *New York Times Magazine*. It gives us some idea of Miss Noonan's scam. "I'd think: this is how Reagan should sound," she tells us. Miss Noonan had reached this Henry Higgins conclusion by reading FDR speeches and the poem "Invictus." Thus was Ronald Reagan invented. If she believes this, she is like the crazy astronomer in *Rasselas* who believes he controls the moon and the tides. In the real world, Reagan sounded like Reagan before Peggy Noonan was born.

And there is more of the crazy-astronomer syndrome. "Speechwriting was where the Administration got invented every day." By Peggy Noonan? Did tax-rate cuts, indexing, SDI, and the Pershing missile occur to her while she was sitting on a bench in Lafayette Park? When did she dream up Grenada?

Worse still—and why the book will be a media favorite—is the fact that she uses her privileged access as a speechwriter to take, now, a sneering attitude toward her staff colleagues, toward Nancy Reagan, and even toward the President himself.

There is a stern moral here for present and future Presidents, viz, when you hire a speechwriter of this moral character, lock up the silverware and keep your hand on your wallet.

NOTES & ASIDES

☐ Dear Mr. Buckley:

I write to draw attention to a literary inevitability that has been averted by our public organs. This lapse is due in part to Congressman Frank's own deployment of the inexact and ridicule-provoking analogue of Eliza Doolittle. At this point, as public investigations have been urged and formal and informal punitive consequences are likely, it should be obvious that the more apt allusion is not to G. B. Shaw, but to Oscar Wilde. Accordingly, the headline of destiny is not 'ENRY 'IGGINS, WASHINGTON STYLE or the like, but rather THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING FRANK.

Sincerely,
John T. Koch
Department of Celtic Languages and Literatures
Harvard University
Cambridge, Mass.

☐ Dear Mr. Buckley:

NATIONAL REVIEW'S "The Week" section charged [Sept. 1] that I have not been "principled enough" to criticize the HUD programs that "fuel the patronage." I've got to wonder where your writer has been for the last six months! I've not only criticized government spending programs, I've suspended and/or canceled four of them: the Mod Rehab program, Title X, Retirement Service Centers, and Co-Insurance. Where outright fraud and mismanagement have occurred, I've carried out fully the Inspector General's reports, immediately fired HUD officials guilty of wrongdoing, and imposed stronger ethics requirements on HUD employees. What's really important in all this, however, is that I'll be recommending total overhaul and reform of policy and programs as my internal review is completed.

But as we go about reforming this Department, I don't want to lose sight of my mission to propose new and promising free-enterprise ideas to fight poverty and despair in urban America! Instead of subsidizing developers and projects, this Administration's anti-poverty agenda will empower poor people through resident management and privatization for public housing and expand opportunity by helping move people out of welfare to independence and self-sufficiency. We want to create more affordable housing by eliminating excessive government regulations and increase economic opportunity through free-enterprise zones.

I believe that these are progressive conservative ideas and can not only help prevent future scandals, but can begin to fight a genuine private-enterprise war on poverty and despair. If the HUD scandals draw attention back to the poor people we should be trying to help, perhaps these outrageous problems and abuses will have served a more constructive

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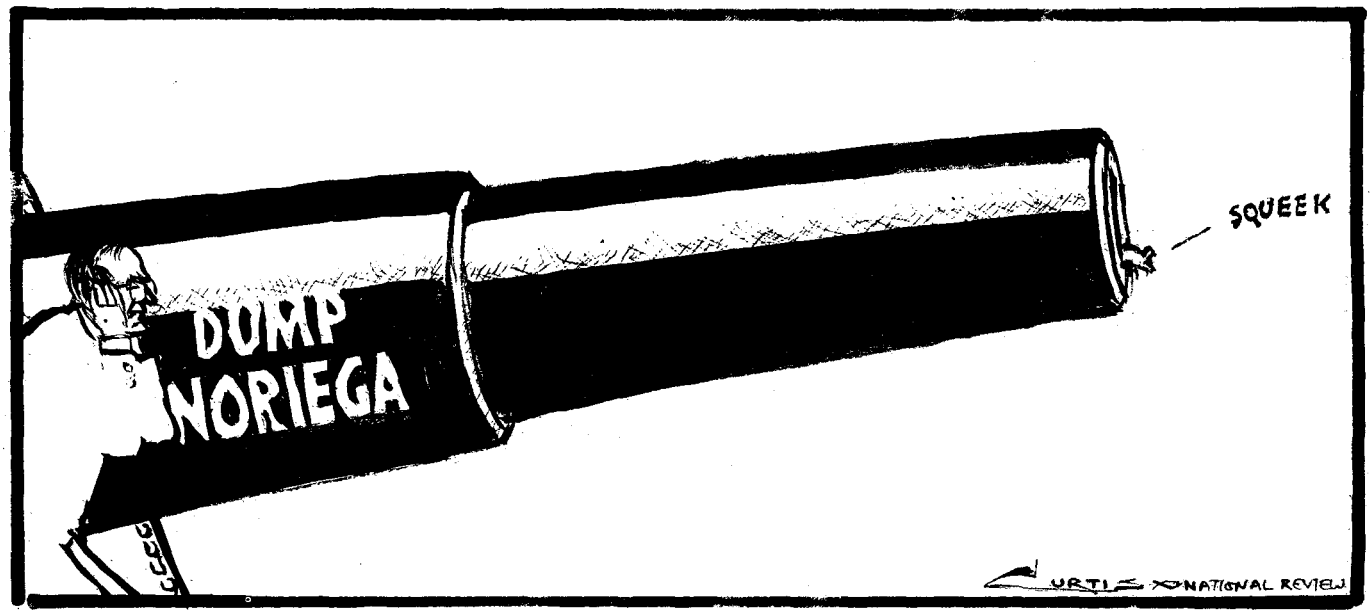

And the mountain labored . . .

purpose than just abolishing HUD, as some would have President Bush and Jack Kemp do.

We prefer to light some candles of hope and democratic capitalism in the despair-darkened inner cities of America.

Very sincerely yours,
Jack Kemp
Washington, D.C.

☐ From Wm. Rickenbacker
Francestown, N.H.

Hermanito estupendo—

I thought I was pretty damned pure, but you are coming close to finding my price. Yes yes yes I will sail around the world with you if you install an organ on your barge, emulating Cleopatra, but I have my standards, you know, and it must be a tracker-action *orgue*, like the venerable Flentrop in Cambridge whence E. Power Biggs launched his revolution in 1945. And Paul Koch must come along to back me up when I run out of fingers, and I shall once again call upon Leonard Bernstein to turn pages for me, and . . .

Mr. Buckley as a result of emergency call we went to Mr. Rick enackers house and removed him from his typewritter and he is resting comftably in the local infirmerary, signed, Peter Flood, chief Marshial.

☐ Dear Mr. Buckley:

I just received my last issue of NATIONAL REVIEW. I was going to postpone renewing until I could buy a new mouse for my Macintosh. But this simply cannot wait. I have always known that the Right is right. But I discovered long ago that I could not get my epistemological bearings without NATIONAL REVIEW. I want you to know I am working a little longer with a nearly dead mouse so I can keep NATIONAL REVIEW coming. This will also delay the memory upgrade I was planning on.

Sincerely,
Ken Wiens
Orange, Calif.

Dear Mr. Wiens: If you subscribe to NATIONAL REVIEW, all you need to memorize is the renewal date. Cordially,
WFB

☐ Dear Mr. Buckley:

I am a practicing attorney in the State of Washington. Most of my practice is in the area of litigation. Recently I represented a man who appealed an earlier decision by the Administrative Law Judge of our State of Washington Department of Social & Health Services. I received the decision this past week signed by the Review Judge from the State Office, and the decision had the following interesting language in it: "Neither the ALJ nor the undersigned Review Judge can do equity . . ." I think many people had suspected for some time that government agencies do not do equity, but I never expected to see it in print.

Very truly yours,
R. John Sloan Jr.
Omak, Wash.

Dear Mr. Sloan: Very interesting. But odd, in a way: and the English language is strangely unaccommodating. Government can do evil, but it can't do its antonym, goodness; and now we learn that it can't do equity, which is really inequitable of the language, right? Cordially,

—WFB

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That Memo

WILLIAM MCGURN

Tim Bower

WASHINGTON, D.C.—One day back in early April the Republican National Committee's director of communications, Mark Goodin, decided to put together a memo on Tom Foley, the man who seemed likeliest to succeed a beleaguered Jim Wright as Speaker of the House. The point was to publicize Congressman Foley's increasingly liberal voting record: Foley was widely perceived as more moderate than Wright, but in fact he had one of the most liberal records in the House. To make the point, Goodin intended to compare Foley's record with that of the liberal Representative Ed Markey (D., Mass.).

But then Goodin called the American Conservative Union, which was updating its ratings. The ACU suggested that Barney Frank be used instead of Markey, for the simple reason that Frank's frequent citations in the press made him better known nationally. As ACU Executive Director Dan Casey explains, "Barney Frank defines liberalism." And so Mr. Frank was substituted for Mr. Markey.

That substitution would cost Mr. Goodin his job.

The reason, of course, is that by the time the memo was released—June 1—it came in the thick of rumors that Mr. Foley was gay. Thus the memo's comparison of him with Mr. Frank, an admitted homosexual, plus its title, "Tom Foley: Out of the Liberal Closet," were denounced as a clumsy attempt to capitalize on those rumors —rumors spread by friends of Jim Wright. (Ironically, early reports of the RNC memo, including a June 6 piece in the *Washington Post*, did not pick up on the gay issue; that only came after Mr. Frank called his press conference and raised the issue himself, threatening to expose gay Republicans.) "Dirtball Politics," thundered *Newsweek*. *Time* called for Lee Atwater's head. Mark Goodin resigned. Everyone forgot about Tom Foley.

"The story on the memo became Frank's reaction to Frank," says the president of Americans for Tax Reform, Grover Norquist. "What happened was that in the uproar what was really in the memo disappeared as an issue."

What was really in that memo, for the few who bothered to read it, was Tom Foley's liberal voting record and some very partisan political statements, none of them particularly outrageous but all belying the impression of the new Speaker as a gentle moderate. Today the initial impression of Foley's moderation is beginning to change, not least because of a *Washington Times* story quoting the Speaker as likening President Bush to a "mad dog after a bone" on capital-gains taxes and deriding his "macho style" in an off-the-record talk with European journalists. Mr. Foley has denied the comments, but his moderate image is not going to be helped by the Democrats' class war over cuts in the capital-gains tax, their vote to remove bans on federal funding of D.C. abortions, and their apparently insatiable appetite for raising taxes.

Since all this comes at a time when President Bush is emphasizing bipartisanship, it's interesting to note that the Speaker's record gives little grounds for hope there. This is exactly what the now infamous RNC memo said. Granted, it's impossible to justify the release of the memo under that title in the midst of rumors about homosexuality. But the text of the memo is substantive and worth a second look. The cover letter gives the idea:

"With the expected ascendancy of Representative Tom Foley (D., Wash.) as the Speaker of the House, many in the Democratic Party and the media will be portraying him as the 'darling' of the moderates. In fact, Mr. Foley has a long history as a liberal —including a recent 85 per cent rating by the ultra-liberal Americans for Democratic Action. Among other things, Foley is an opponent of the death penalty for drug kingpins, of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), and aid to the Contras.

"Attached please find some talking points on Tom Foley's liberal record which might be helpful to you in setting the record straight in your dealings with the media."

The text did just that. Moreover, it compared Mr. Foley not just to Barney Frank but to Jim Wright and to the average Democrat, using ACU ratings to show that although not as far to the left as Mr. Frank, Mr. Foley was further to the left than Mr. Wright and much further than the average Democrat. On the flip side, on issues important to Americans for Democratic Action, the memo noted that Foley voted with Frank (a former ADA president) 75 per cent of the time, compared to 64 per cent for Jim Wright.

The memo grew out of a concern that even though the Democrats were putting in a more liberal leadership they were being hailed as more moderate. This was most apparent in the gentle treatment given Senator George Mitchell (ACU rating 15, ADA rating 95) when he was tapped as Majority Leader last year; the word liberal went widely unmentioned.

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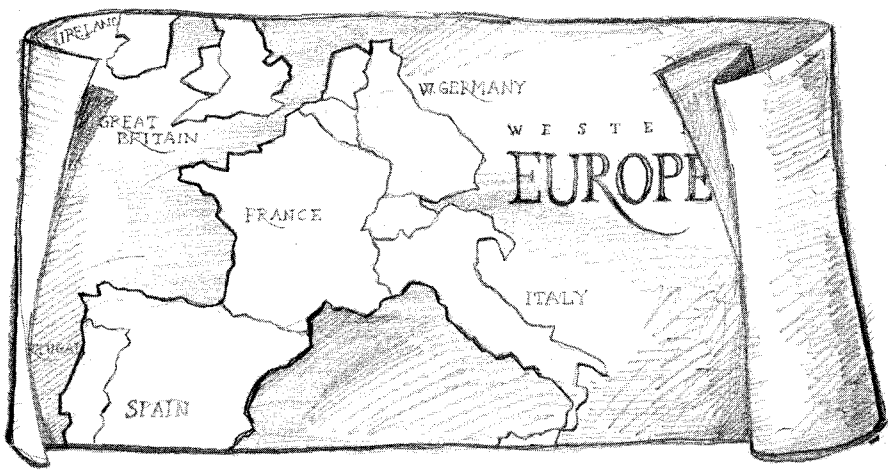
Nevertheless, the RNC memo yielded the exact opposite result of its intention, in that Mr. Foley appeared to be a moderate victim of extremist Republican tactics. To be sure, this image was reinforced by Mr. Foley's personal demeanor, which like Senate Majority Leader Mitchell's is more measured and less vitriolic than that of his predecessor. It has also been helped by the fact that the liberals have been losing on the legislative front. The question is what happens when they recover. "Gephardt, Gray, and Foley are the most liberal House leadership in history," says Minority Whip Newt Gingrich (R., Ga.). "They're nice people, but they're nice liberals, and they're serious about their liberal views. We have to remember that in dealing with them, because the gulf between their views and the Administration's is going to continue to cause problems." □

Thatcherism across the Channel

JEAN-MARIE BENOIST



Tim Bower

PARIS—On Friday, October 6, some two hundred people gathered in a stuffy committee room of the French National Assembly in Paris. Magistrates, politicians, academics, publicists; British, French, German, Spanish—these people, representative of the diversity of Europe, were devoting a whole afternoon to tackling, in a series of brief presentations, the juridical, economic, and cultural aspects of the topic: "Uniformity or Pluralism in Europe."

Such an event would be routine, scarcely worth mentioning, were it not for the fact that the participants—hosts and guests alike—were linked together by a common allegiance to the ideas developed by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in her famous "Bruges speech." In this speech, delivered in the antique Belgian city which epitomizes the memory of Europe, Mrs. Thatcher had set forth the series of guiding principles which, in her view, would "ensure that Europe does succeed, not just in economic and defense terms but in the quality of life and the influence of its people."

Mrs. Thatcher was speaking on the eve of the implementation of the Single Act, which pledges that by 1992 all economic barriers will be abolished within the European Community. Some observers in America and in Asia fear that the "single market" thus created might become a formidable economic power deploying protectionist weapons against the outside world. But such apprehensions concerning the power of a "fortress Europe" are nothing in comparison with the fear felt by free-market Europeans. They foresee the whole continent becoming the prey of a monstrous Eurobureaucracy which, through a jungle of centralistic regulations, would seek to devour national differences, giving Europe a monochromatic, featureless unity.

Avoiding this fate means respecting the sovereignty of the EC's member states. In Mrs. Thatcher's view, "a willing and active cooperation between independent sovereign states is the best way to build a successful European Community." Europe, she continued, "will be stronger precisely because it has France as France, Spain as Spain, Britain as Britain, each with its own customs, traditions, and identity. It would be folly to try to fit them into some sort of identikit European personality."

These were the concerns that led to the formation of the "Bruges group," whose French and British committees co-hosted that October 6 meeting. The group grew out of an ad-hoc British committee founded last spring by Lord Harris of High Cross. The members of the British group faced an important challenge: they were described by their adversaries as "petty nationalists," "little-Englanders." If they were to speak effectively to their counterparts on the Continent they had to prove that they were fully committed to the Community.

Patrick Robertson, the general secretary of the movement, was well aware of this danger, and he and Lord Harris worked tirelessly to join forces with like-minded groups on the Continent, especially the German Frankfurt Group, made up of first-rate economists gathered around Professor Gert Dahlmans; a Spanish group headed by Pedro Schwarz of the University of Madrid; and the French Union for a Community of Sovereign States, chaired by Alain Griotteray, a member of the French Parliament, and Professor André Decocq of the Law Faculty of Paris; the French group includes the fine jurist François Goguel, and Jean Foyer, former Chief Justice of France. These all responded with enthusiasm and gathered with their British counterparts to sound the alarm about the increasing role of the Executive Commission—the appointive body (chaired by Jacques Delors, whose socialist inclinations are not concealed) which acts as the executive power of Europe.

For the Bruges spirit includes not only a concern to preserve the riches of European diversity against uniformity and a sort of super-Jacobin homogenization, but also a profound resistance against the forces of regulation, "superstate" control, and socialization. Mrs. Thatcher accurately

Mr. Benoist is a Senior Fellow of the Collège de France in Paris. His first book, Marx Is Dead, *started the anti-Marxist struggle in Europe in the Seventies. His most recent book is* The Tools of Liberty, *a work on the conditions of a free polity.*

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RIGHT DATA

The Privatization Potential

GOVERNMENTS around the world have privatized $160 billion worth of assets over the past five years, according to *Privatization 1989*, published by the Reason Foundation. The U.S., described as "virtually alone in having no serious national commitment to privatization," accounted for only $7.2 billion of the total—$1.6 billion from the 1987 sale of Conrail, the rest from the sale of agricultural, veteran, and student loans.

The potential in this country is great, however. While we don't have the national monopolies in steel, airplanes, and communications that have fueled privatization in Europe and Japan, we do have land. More than one-third of the nation's land area is owned by the Federal Government. Much of it is leased for commercial use at rates far below the cost of managing the land. Privatizing the 375 million acres of timberland and grazing land managed by the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management could yield $160 billion over a ten-year period, according to Reason's calculations. The Bush budget highlights some less well-known privatization possibilities, including:

Naval Petroleum Reserves: Established by Woodrow Wilson to help the Navy make the transition from coal to oil, they have long since lost their strategic importance. Selling the government's oil fields at Elk Hills, California, and Teapot Dome, Wyoming, could raise $1 billion in up-front cash plus in-kind payments of oil (50,000 barrels per day) for the Strategic Petroleum Reserve.

Spectrum License Fees: The Federal Government has awarded licenses for use of radio frequencies since 1927. Although most frequencies were assigned years ago, the FCC regularly makes new assignments as technological advances make more of the spectrum useable. Auctioning off the rights to six megahertz of unused cellular-radio frequencies would raise $3.4 billion over two years.

Helium Processing: The Federal Government began processing helium in 1929 and was the sole supplier until 1961. Today the private helium industry can satisfy both the government and private-sector demand for this substance. Sale of the federal production facility and its hundred-year supply of helium would raise $60 million.

Alaska Power Administration: The Federal Government produces 6 per cent of the nation's electricity, mainly from hydro power. With few exceptions its energy pricing policies are the same as those that prevailed when the federal dams were built in the 1930s. As a result the government sells power worth $4 billion for $2.5 billion. Negotiations are under way to sell the dams and transmission lines that provide power to Anchorage and Juneau to a consortium of utilities and the State of Alaska. Probable revenue: $85 million.

These initiatives, while modest in scope, may face tough sledding. Congress has passed 37 laws explicitly blocking privatization, including some that prevent agencies from even studying the possibility of saving money through privatization. Some laws prevent federal unions from participating in privatization negotiations, making agreement virtually impossible to achieve. A little *perestroika* seems in order here.

—ED RUBENSTEIN

pinpointed the risk when she said: "If Europe is to flourish and create the jobs of the future . . . our aim should not be more and more detailed regulation from the center; it should be to deregulate, to remove the constraints on trade and to open up." While the Treaty of Rome—the founding act of the EC thirty years ago—had been intended as a "Charter of Economic Liberty," the perverse result of the functioning of its institutions has been to create more and more bureaucratic regulations. The acme of this process would be the "social charter," the project of Messrs. Mitterrand and Delors, who would like to turn the various nations of the Community into a unified social-democratic welfare state. This would be done through the Executive Commission, which, under the terms of the Single Act, would have even more power than it already has to implement regulations without ever having them ratified by the national parliaments.

The reaction of the meeting in Paris was clear: Why should a European superstate be imposed, just as, in each country, a strenuous effort of deregulation and encouragement of the private sector is going forward? The prospect of a central bank issuing a Euro currency which would supplement all the national currencies was considered with the same caution.

Many of the speakers mentioned the idea of introducing constitutional rules to strictly limit the role of the Commission. Pedro Schwarz in particular warned against adopting the principle of subsidiarity—according to which action is taken at the most local level possible in any given case—too rigidly. We must not create erratic domains that would be as hampering as the supranational control we are trying to avoid.

The attempt to portray the Bruges group as "bad Europeans" is especially futile in the realm of defense. The participants at the October 6 meeting, following Mrs. Thatcher, have repeated their attachment to a common European defense within NATO. Their loyalty to Europe and their commitment to its future is deep and sincere; what they fear is not the Community dreamed of by men like Jean Monnet, Robert Schuman, or Alcide de Gasperi, but of its caricature in the form of a supranational, socialist, bureaucratic state.

The contention between these two blocs—the Thatcherite, free-market, patriotic Europeans on the one hand, and the bureaucratic, socialist homogenizers on the other hand—is large enough. But its implications are larger yet: Will we in Western Europe be able to encourage those who, in Eastern Europe, are stepping out of the darkness of totalitarianism by offering them the prospect of a free-enterprise, free-market Europe able to defend the national characteristics of member states? Or will we offer them the grey prospect of a uniform social democracy?

Europeans must start thinking constitutionally if they wish to preserve their freedom from the encroachments of an arbitrary executive which is not

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even elected by the people. "Constitutionally" means: through proper institutions; a second house in the European parliament, gathering national and regional delegations, could perhaps be the object of a bold new initiative. This teething of Europe through the "Bruges *v.* Delors" feud should have prepared us for the task of formulating our own (con)federalist papers. America, we will be learning from you. □

Rusting Iron Curtain

ERIK von KUEHNELT-LEDDIHN

Tim Bower

MUNICH—The dramatic events taking place behind the rusting Iron Curtain have been filling the television screens and front pages of newspapers in the West—the election of a non-Communist government in Poland, the steady movement of Hungary toward the West, and the turmoil in the German Democratic Republic. But while these phenomena have certain features in common, they are very different in origin.

What caused Poland and Hungary to move away from Moscow is their aristocratic tradition combined with a strong religious factor. Catholic nations are traditionally anti-disciplinarian and averse to law and order—Frederick II of Prussia considered Catholics ungovernable. Aristocracies, meanwhile, are by nature opposed to strong central government. Poland in particular—historically the most liberal country in Europe (calling itself a "republic" as early as 1572)—was always more or less anarchical, its people ready to die heroically rather than to live by compromises.

The East German story is completely different. The East Germans are mostly progressive, enlightened, law-abiding Protestants with a great respect for the printed word; like most northern Europeans, they believe in evolution rather than revolution. There are few well-known dissidents in East Germany, and no conspiratorial organizations. Luther, who wrote that "the princes are gods," preached unconditional submission even to a tyrannical ruler (his *leidender Gehorsam*, long-suffering obedience). These people, who had a history of submission to autocratic rulers, were carefully selected by the Soviets for their "socialist experiment."

I documented this predisposition statistically some time ago, in my *Liberty or Equality* (Caldwell, 1952). It took me months to prepare two maps showing the percentage of National Socialist and Communist votes in each *Kreis* (county) in the elections of July 31, 1932. First of all, one has to keep in mind that for every two National Socialists there was one Communist (in the last free elections, in November 1932, the Communists sent one hundred deputies to the Reichstag). In the July elections, the National Socialists swept all over north Germany except for the northwestern corner and the largely Catholic heart of East Prussia. But the real shock comes if one studies the map of Communist votes. For one can see at a glance that the area with the heaviest Communist vote is almost identical with the territory of modern East Germany.

Thus the most "progressive," "modern" part of Germany became a Soviet satellite. Americans have been told by the mass media that the National Socialists were, in spite of their name, aristocratic, feudal, and rightist reactionaries. *The very opposite is true.* Ralf Dahrendorf, the outstanding German sociologist, said that National Socialism meant the irruption of modernity into Germany. And, indeed, a morbidly high level of discipline, uniformity, unification, and, above all, welfarism was introduced. A German citizenship was established and inter-German diplomatic representations abolished. Local flags were outlawed, local traditions and ecclesiastical independence curtailed, individualism persecuted, private enterprise strictly regulated. (National Socialist authors expressed admiration for the American New Deal.)

This helps explain why the wave of *glasnost* and *perestroika* has not yet reached East Berlin, and why the East Germans, who staged a minor revolt some 36 years ago, have not continued to resist. Furthermore, one must bear in mind that East Germany is under Soviet occupation. I could imagine that, if the Red Army were to withdraw, the National People's Army would almost automatically stage a coup d'état. On the other hand, I can hardly imagine a general revolution.

However, set against this is the magnetism of the Federal Republic, about whose internal life *everything* is known in the East, the news seeping in via radio and television. Hence the mass exodus as soon as the opportunity presented itself. Such a temptation does not exist for the other satellites, who do not have their nearest relatives just a stone's throw away.

But even more exciting are more recent developments within the GDR. In a demonstration (with which the police did not interfere) after a divine service in the Lutheran Nikolai Church of Leipzig, some 15,000 participants shouted in chorus: "We are going to stay!" In other words, these people don't want to quit; they want to "reform" the GDR. Will they succeed? Their national tradition is heavily against it; but with the heady breezes of freedom blowing both from the west and from the east, we could yet see the end of the present order in

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A Sea of Stars

ANDREW FERGUSON

Tim Bower

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The dancer and actor, Gregory Hines, was telling me there were so many homeless people in his Manhattan neighborhood that he felt compelled to come here for the next day's "Housing Now!" march on the Mall. As I scribbled dutifully in my reporter's notebook, an elderly woman tapped Hines on the shoulder. "Are you Dick Gregory?" she asked.

Thus the problem: the Left is suffering from a surfeit of celebrities, and as a consequence the currency of stardom itself has been devalued. The elderly woman had never heard of Gregory Hines and, since she had paid $150 to come to this "Housing Now!" cocktail party in a Capitol Hill hotel on the promise of meeting stars (250 of them, according to the press releases), her disappointment was palpable. "Where are they?" she asked, with a slight stomp of her foot, after Hines had moved on. As if in answer, a tall, handsome man approached and gestured to my notebook.

"It's good to see so many people turn out for a good cause," he said. I understood at once that he was a celebrity and that he meant to be interviewed. I obliged, though I hadn't the slightest idea who he was. "In my consciousness, the homeless are everywhere," he said.

"What have you been in?" the woman demanded suddenly.

Taken aback, the fellow held up two fingers. "You might have seen me in *V*?" he said. The woman frowned. His voice rose hopefully: "*Beastmaster*?"

Mr. Ferguson is an editorial writer for the Scripps Howard news service.

Nada. "I'm developing a project with Fonda right now," he continued, turning back to me. "Been doing a lot of writing." He introduced us to his wife, who looked a lot like Connie Chung but wasn't. The elderly woman lumbered away.

As the party progressed, one of the "Housing Now!" flacks confided, with a note of panic in her voice: "Many of my best celebs are still in the air!" A chartered plane from Los Angeles—which the flack pledged was crammed with "one of the most fabulous outpourings from the celebrity community I've ever seen"—was three hours late getting into Dulles airport. Meanwhile, the $150 customers made do with the huge buffets set around ice sculpture, several bars manned by free-pouring bartenders, a passable band, and Gregory Hines. I noticed the fellow from *V* disconsolately talking to his wife in the corner.

The "celebrity community" the flack referred to is the network of left-wing performers who can be counted on to spare a weekend for a demonstration on behalf of the homeless, the FMLN, the ozone layer, abortion rights—whatever's on that week's menu. In the early Eighties the network was notoriously vast, and organizers could afford to be selective: sometimes it seemed as if nothing less than a Streep would do. But with the normalizing of America, response from the community has fallen off, and the organizers have apparently had to rely on whoever has nothing else to do. Increasingly, at celebrity fundraisers, the question buzzing through the press corps is: "Who's that?" And the answer is likely to be, as a photographer told me at the "Housing Now!" party: "I think that's the guy who was on those episodes of *Wiseguy* where Vinnie was assigned to assassinate the guy but he fell in love with the blonde chick who was his sister. But I'm not sure." Try fitting that in a photo caption for the Style section.

At last the star-laden bus from Dulles arrived. I stood in the hotel vestibule outside the party watching celebrities make their way through the crush of security and cameramen and onlookers. Time and again, the TV lights from *Entertainment Tonight*'s crew would switch on, bodies would jostle, cameras would whir; I would crane my neck, expecting, I guess, Paul Newman, and there . . . there would be a rather menacing-looking fellow who, for all I could tell, was a hotel dishwasher masquerading in leather.

To be fair, I should add that it's still relatively easy to spot a celebrity, even if you don't know precisely who he is. There's the leather outfit, first and foremost. All the men have jaws like granitic outcroppings, aquiline noses, and long hair moussed and brushed straight back to reveal hugely exaggerated widow's peaks. The famous women, for their part, share a preference for tights, homburgs pressed down in the manner of Ben Turpin, and furiously batting eyes. Anorexia seems still to be a problem. They are tanned and programmed to talk self-effacingly. But the question was never far beneath the surface: "Who's that?"

In one of his standard stump speeches, Jesse Jackson says, "We can't all be famous, because we can't all be well known." He should pass the word the next time he's in L.A. Beyond that, however, you wouldn't be overreaching to find in the tepid celebrity turnout a metaphor for the march itself. That "Housing Now!" was a bust is acknowledged by all but the cheeriest do-gooders. Before the march, sponsors were wisely tight-lipped with projections of the turnout, but informal talk of "hundreds of thousands" wasn't uncommon. The official Park District count was about forty thousand.

I managed to rouse myself for the celebrity breakfast the next morning, when the Hollywood contingent walked from their hotel to a nearby shelter to break bread with some real homeless folks, for whom, after all, they had given Hollywood's last full measure of devotion—a coach seat on a chartered jet and a shot to be on *Entertainment Tonight*. Reverend Jackson showed up—of course—and he created a stir, but for the most part the celebrities went unnoticed. I did see at least one person I recognized, though. He was tall, good-looking. He was talking to one of the homeless. He leaned down, the better to be heard. "*Beastmaster*?" he shouted, hopefully, but the homeless fellow just shook his head. □

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TRUE POWER TO THE PEOPLE

Razing the Liberal Plantation

The liberal welfare establishment, while purporting to help the poor, has taken them over, using them as a means to power. Herewith two strategies—one general, the second focused on education—for breaking that power, freeing the poor, and, not incidentally, gaining the benefit of their contributions to society.

A Conservative War on Poverty

STUART BUTLER

With the irrepressible Jack Kemp now running the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), there is much talk among Washington conservatives of a new "War on Poverty." Yet other than Kemp himself, those who discuss such a war do so almost nervously.

The main reason for this uneasiness is that declaring a War on Poverty would not be like pledging to pursue such mainstream conservative objectives as cutting taxes or improving the nation's schools. A War on Poverty would be more like the search for the Holy Grail, a campaign destined for either glory or disaster. Success would mean destruction of perhaps the central tenet of American liberalism: that only the liberal welfare state can alleviate the plight of the poor. But failure would entrench even more deeply the notion that liberalism is their only hope.

Why take the risk? many conservative insiders ask. When we have won so much, why risk everything on the reckless gamble of trying to end poverty?

This hesitation is understandable. After all, the liberal welfare state is politically well entrenched, its advocates on Capitol Hill swift to trash any conservative initiative. And Ronald Reagan didn't help much. The Gipper could be clear and eloquent on cutting taxes, or on defending America. But when it came to dealing with poverty, he mumbled. Even when his policies made sense, Reagan offered no clear anti-poverty blueprint that Joe Lunchpail could understand. That was damaging, for it allowed liberals credibly to make the charge that conservatives really don't give a hoot about the poor.

Punch-drunk conservatives, however, must realize that they have no alternative but to declare an assault on poverty. If they don't, they will forever be on the moral and intellectual defensive, and ordinary Americans will continue to shovel money into the inept welfare state as reparations for the alleged inequities of the free market.

Moreover, the time is ripe, as more and more governments around the world come to recognize that market mechanisms are the only effective weapons against stagnation and poverty. In Peking, those who are trying to crush demands for Western-style political freedom still understand that markets and private ownership are needed to drag China out of its economic backwater. In Lima, Hernando de Soto, author of *The Other Path*, has documented vividly how the illegal, underground market economy is saving the poor of Peru, while around them the centralized socialist system is self-destructing.

Even Hanoi seems to be catching market fever. Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach recently delivered a pithy denunciation of rent control, pointing out that controls merely diminish the stock of decent housing. "The Americans couldn't destroy Hanoi," declared Thach, "but we have destroyed our city with very low rents. We realized it was stupid and that we must change policy." What a shame he can't run for mayor of New York!

Here at home, the 1980s has been a watershed decade for the debate over poverty. The Reagan era has seen frontal attacks on the foundations of the Great Society, the most crushing of which was Charles Murray's *Losing Ground*. It has also seen many thoughtful liberals admit that there are serious flaws in the Great Society welfare state. It has seen the revival of the states as the leading edge of domestic policy-making, reversing decades of Washington dominance. It has seen the beginnings of a spirited debate within what had seemed a monolithic black community. Rising stars such as Robert Woodson openly challenge the tired old black leadership, arguing that self-confident economic enterprise, not quotas and more welfare, is the key to minority progress. And perhaps most significant of all, the 1980s has seen conservative

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organizations allying with the poor to win significant political victories in such areas as education, public housing, and drug policy.

Conservatives know that the key to ending poverty is to use the market economy to generate wealth. They also know that the market system is driven by such fundamental pressures as consumer choice, competition among suppliers of goods and services, encouragement of entrepreneurship, and decentralization of decision-making. The liberal welfare state has entrapped the poor because it ignores or rejects these cardinal principles.

A conservative War on Poverty thus is not some version of welfare reform. Its goals instead should be to introduce the powerful stimulus of enterprise into the nation's most impoverished communities. But to achieve this, conservatives must not merely propose changes that would introduce market dynamics within these neighborhoods: they must propose a strategy that would build a powerful political constituency to defeat the welfare-state coalition. This strategy would include four major steps:

1. *Reach an accommodation on civil rights.* The black community has perhaps the most to gain from a successful attack on poverty. Winning its support is a necessary condition for introducing market solutions.

But there's a snag. Most conservatives simply fail to appreciate how sensitive the civil-rights issue is for blacks. Conservatives may well have good constitutional arguments when they contest the wisdom of the 1960s civil-rights legislation, or when they champion suits against reverse discrimination, but in doing so they deeply offend the black community. As Robert Woodson tartly reminds conservative audiences, "There must be a conservative legal foundation supporting every single aggrieved white fireman. Black Americans just want to know where these conservatives were when millions of blacks were facing brutal repression. We know where the liberals were."

Woodson argues that the civil-rights battles of the 1960s were an essential stage in the progress of blacks, but that now it is time to move on. Woodson marched in the movement. He was a senior official in the National Urban League. But he split with the traditional black leadership because it failed to see the civil-rights victories as the foundation for the economic independence of black Americans. Today's official black leaders, says Woodson, demean their own community by arguing that black Americans can only progress through special legal preferences and handouts from whites.

For conservatives, forming an alliance with men like Woodson means admitting they were deeply wrong during the 1960s civil-rights crusade. And it means shutting up about white firemen. It also means adopting what has sometimes been termed a "positive" civil-rights agenda. This is an agenda of civil-rights litigation and legislation aimed at removing pernicious regulatory obstacles to black economic improvement.

Powerful economic groups routinely resort to government regulation to shut out competition from weaker groups. Ever since the post–Civil War Jim Crow laws, precisely the same process of regulation has been used to deny economic opportunities to blacks and other minorities. For example, the Davis–Bacon Act requires "prevailing" (that is, union) wage rates to be paid on federally supported construction projects, and places restrictions on the proportion of apprentices and unskilled workers that can be employed. The effect is to limit job opportunities for the poor and for blacks—indeed, the law was enacted in the Depression specifically to keep itinerant black labor from competing for construction jobs. Similarly, a host of zoning and licensing requirements, ranging from limits on home-based businesses, to taxicab regulation, to restrictions on sidewalk vendors, place often insurmountable barriers in the way of Americans trying to move out of poverty by starting a small business.

Fortunately, some conservative groups well understand the economic importance and political potency of attacking such regulations. The Landmark Legal Foundation's Center for Civil Rights, for instance, has been taking cases on behalf of black victims of economic regulation. Conservative legal foundations need to mount more lawsuits of this kind. The way to win the confidence and then the political blessing of black Americans is to stand shoulder to shoulder in court with the welfare mother who is blocked from starting a typing business in her home, or the inner-city youth who is barred from working on a building site. Confidence is not engendered by conservative attorneys chasing firetrucks to see if any members of the Teamsters Union are upset about affirmative action.

2. *Adopt a strategy of empowerment.* Having crossed the credibility hurdle of civil rights, conservatives should make the economic empowerment of poor Americans the central theme of their War on Poverty. The idea of giving poor Americans real power over their lives does not sit well with many conservatives, for whom "power to the people" conjures up a 1960s image of long-haired radicals. Yet this view of empowerment persists only because the Left hijacked and corrupted the term. To the liberals, empowerment is a strictly political device to secure control over the resources of others. Thus the Great Society established a network of "community-action agencies," designed to influence the distribution of government resources on behalf of the poor. The poor supposedly were to be allowed "maximum feasible participation" in the design of programs and the distribution of funds.

The sham of Great Society empowerment is now well documented. Increasingly, real power rested with the providers of social services to the poor. The Great Society spawned a vast middle-class poverty industry: public-housing managers, social workers, job-training specialists, day-care providers, and the like. This industry earns its revenues not from its clients—the poor—but from government. And like any industry dependent on government

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rather than consumers, it has little incentive to serve those consumers.

By contrast, the conservative idea of empowerment derives from the movement's roots in market economics and classical liberalism—power not as control over others, but as the freedom to control one's own affairs, the essential ingredient of economic improvement. Thus a conservative War on Poverty would focus on such consumer strategies as introducing education vouchers or similar mechanisms to give inner-city parents real choice over the education of their children, and thus the incentive and power to force improvement in the quality of schools. It would address housing needs not by building new projects, thereby enriching developers and segregating the poor into ghettos, but by providing rental assistance to the poor and allowing them to shop around in the market like any other Americans.

These forms of empowerment have an impressive record in combatting poverty and its causes—which really is not surprising, since consumer choice is the driving force behind wealth creation. But economic empowerment doesn't concern only the consumer. It also implies freedom for the poor to act as entrepreneurs, so that they can create employment and wealth for the community and cease to be captives of the poverty industry. That is the rationale behind ideas like enterprise zones, a concept championed by Mr. Kemp. Enterprise zones would be established in impoverished areas by cutting taxes and regulations so as to clear away barriers to small, local entrepreneurs.

Such "supply-side empowerment" would also mean removing obstacles preventing groups within a poor community from supplying government-funded services. When services are delivered by professionals from outside the community, the contract fees do not go to boost the economy of the community, and the service providers aim to satisfy the government, not the poor. But when the people delivering a service are the same people who receive its benefits, they have every incentive to serve the poor efficiently.

This is the secret behind the dramatic success of tenant management in public housing. In St. Louis, Boston, Washington, and other cities, the embryonic movement has turned once crime-ridden, blighted projects into models of improvement and hope. Crime has been cut, maintenance and administrative costs slashed. Even more important, tenant managers have moved residents off welfare by giving them jobs taking care of the project. In some instances, like Washington's Kenilworth / Parkside project, jobs have even been created in small businesses established within the project itself. In short, allowing poor communities to manage their own affairs is not just a way to improve services and give dignity to the poor—it is also a potent method of generating economic growth in those communities.

3. *Attack the poverty industry.* This is a powerful political tool as well as an effective mechanism to alleviate poverty. Empowering the poor means taking power away from the welfare industry. Just like any other cartel, those who benefit from the current power structure understandably resist any loss of control. That is why teachers oppose education vouchers, housing authorities try to block tenant management, and welfare caseworkers try to limit experiments in self-help.

By supporting real empowerment, therefore, conservative poverty-warriors can trigger confrontations between the poor and the welfare state that serves them so badly. These confrontations will help conservatives to build the coalitions needed to tip the political balance in favor of their proposals. For example, in 1987, conservative-sponsored legislation to promote tenant management in public housing pitted the poor against unions and public-housing authorities. Liberal congressmen were forced to make a painful choice between the poor and the opponents of empowerment. Many of them ended up voting against the poor they claimed to represent. The legislation was passed, but public-housing residents saw that their real allies were the conservatives.

4. *Allow states to be the innovators of anti-poverty policy.* In an effort to coordinate action and overcome state resistance in the South, the Great Society tried to fight poverty by centralizing the national effort. Unfortunately for the poor, centralization, as it always does, soon began to suffocate the innovation that comes from diversity.

This may not have been much of a concern in the 1960s, when many of the states were policy backwaters. But today it is states that are pushing for change in such areas as education and welfare reform, trying out innovative ideas to obtain the greatest impact with the least money. Today it is restrictive federal regulation that frustrates many states which are eager to tackle poverty.

A core element of a conservative War on Poverty must therefore be to give the fullest possible rein to the creative juices of state government. While conservatives can feel confident that their basic economic and political principles will form the foundation for a successful attack on poverty, they should also remember that diversity and experimentation are needed to find the best practical policies. Diversity allows these policies to adjust to local conditions. Even more important, it helps discover better policies by permitting trials of new ideas.

The Reagan Administration introduced a mechanism to encourage such decentralization and diversification. The Low Income Opportunity Board, launched in 1987, is an interagency body designed to speed up the process by which states can obtain exemptions from federal rules, to allow them to reorganize anti-poverty programs so as to test new approaches. The Board has been responsible for giving the green light to many of the most important welfare reforms across the country.

However, current law severely restricts the Board's activities. For instance, states cannot easily consolidate money from Food Stamps and Aid to Families with Dependent Children, even if they have a plausible plan to reduce poverty by doing so.

Conservatives, therefore, should push for legislation expanding the power of the Board. This would encourage ever greater innovation by states, boosting the chances of policy breakthroughs and allowing existing funds to be used more creatively. But this strategy would not expose conservatives to the charge of turning back the clock to the 1960s, when states could ignore the plight of the poor. On the contrary, states could win relief from federal rules only if they could make a strong case that they had found a more effective way to achieve the intent of federal policy.

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States could not obtain permission to ignore federal policy—only to improve on it.

By stimulating economic entrepreneurship among individuals and organizations in poor communities, and policy entrepreneurship among states, conservatives could marshal powerful forces to combat poverty in America. The liberal welfare state, like the world's collectivist economies, has failed because it hobbles the creativity of the poor it intends to help. The American experience, and the more recent experience of other capitalist countries, shows that poor people move rapidly up the economic ladder when they are given the opportunity. A conservative War on Poverty would succeed because it would unleash those creative forces for self-improvement. □

The Choice Backlash

CHESTER E. FINN JR.

THE National Education Association made headlines in July when delegates to its annual convention voted to oppose school choice. Though limited local versions were omitted from the NEA's hitlist, the nation's largest organization of educators basically rejected the principle that parents and children should be able to select the school they favor. Not long before, the American Association of School Administrators had declined to endorse choice. The National School Boards Association okayed it as a "local option" only. The head of the National Association of Secondary School Principals pronounced choice a "magic word" apt to cause more trouble than gain. And the congressman with probably the greatest sway over federal education policy—House Education and Labor Committee Chairman Augustus Hawkins—declared that choice was apt to "sidetrack" efforts to strengthen education.

All this happened within the span of six months. During the same half-year period, three more states—Arkansas, Iowa, and Nebraska—followed Minnesota's lead and adopted statewide public-school choice plans. Several others—California, Colorado, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Idaho, and Arizona—came closer to embracing similar policies. A number of cities, notably including Seattle and Boston, installed local choice programs, magnet schools continued to flourish, and President Bush and his education secretary declared choice to be the linchpin of their strategy for educational improvement.

One could simply conclude that 1989 is a time of widespread attention to the idea of choice, and this would be true—as far as it goes. But something more consequential appears to be going on. We can spot the beginning of a significant backlash among educators to the spread of public-school choice, as well as bitter hostility to the faintest hint that private schools should be included.

I will not attempt to give a complete tour of the choice domain as it appears in late 1989, or to advance a comprehensive rationale for this powerful idea. But its central themes should be grasped before turning to those of its detractors. Choice rests on three key premises.

The first is the society's commitment to equal opportunity for all, and our recognition that poor and minority youngsters are most apt to be trapped in wretched schools, their families unable to afford to move to places with better public schools or to shoulder the cost burden of private education. For such boys and girls and their families, the principle of choice portends release, opportunity, and upward mobility. This, it may be noted, is why so many liberals have come to favor the idea.

The second premise is that parents, rather than the state, should make fundamental decisions about where and how children will learn. The larger society has the right to oblige youngsters to attend school, but not to dictate which school they will attend. "The child," said the Supreme Court in a durable 1925 decision, "is not the mere creature of the state."

Third comes the judgment that schools need a "marketplace" around them. If obliged to compete for pupils and resources, either they will become (or remain) effective, hence will attract enough "customers," or they will wither and vanish. Only when youngsters and their parents may select among schools does this marketplace arise.

These assertions, let's be honest, spring more from ratiocination and conviction than from airtight research. Though many Americans have long exercised choice for their daughters and sons by settling in particular neighborhoods or by patronizing private schools, the idea of school choice as a purposeful public policy is relatively new on our shores. And the version of choice with which we have the least experience—statewide plans that allow children to attend public schools in districts other than those where they reside—is the most controversial, yet also the boldest and fastest-moving at present.

WHY NOT GIVE these "naturally occurring" experiments a fair and full test, reserving judgment until there is clearer evidence as to just what large-scale choice does or doesn't accomplish? This would seem reasonable. But one must never presume reasonableness among educators when a bold departure from customary practice is being mooted. Whatever their characteristic views on matters of foreign and domestic policy, when it comes to their own work American educators are deeply conservative—in the old-fashioned sense of being disinclined to alter one's accustomed ways.

As for choice advocates, they aren't inclined to wait for sure proof, either. They see hundreds of thousands of youngsters receiving lackluster educations in the schools they're currently attending (or dropping out of), and are prepared to make sweeping changes. Choice is not the only such entry on the policy chart in the late 1980s—accountability schemes and alternative certification programs are other lively examples. Choice is today part of an increasingly radical reform movement that is sweeping over our education system, led mainly by elected officials and businessmen rather than education professionals, and powerfully supported—so say the polls—by the general public. Today's reformers are seeking to effect nonincremental increases in the educational achievement of the typical or average child. Hence choice is no longer

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linked to singular cases or small subsets of the population. It is a principle by which to reconstruct the fundamental organizational dynamics of the whole vast enterprise of elementary/secondary education.

THAT, I think, accounts for the zeal and urgency of the advocates—and also for the vigor of the opponents. Were this just another in an interminable parade of pilot programs and innovations, it would not warrant the attention of President Bush or Congressman Hawkins. Something larger is at stake. There are ideas in conflict here, principles at war, doctrines in contention. This makes the tussle much more interesting, to be sure, but also vastly more consequential.

In examining this phenomenon, I believe the primary arguments against choice fall into four categories.

1. *The Monster Trying to Get His Foot in the Door.* The beast, of course, is privatization; the proposition is that public-school choice is but an appetizer or hors d'oeuvre on the policy menu and that the main course must inevitably be the "V word." Under a pure voucher system there wouldn't be any meaningful difference between public and private schools. All schools, regardless of auspices and governance, would, in effect, function as private institutions, with their customers enabled to pay the costs via publicly financed chits that could be turned in at any school. The greatest bugaboos here are that church-related schools would become eligible for government aid; that people would tend to segregate their children into schools by race, religion, and social class; and that the 140-or-so-year-old American experiment with "public" education would gradually come to an end.

THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, MR. PRESIDENT. OUR FACTORY-LIKE SCHOOLS SEEM TO BE TURNING OUT INFERIOR PRODUCTS!
PUBLIC SCHOOL
2+2=..22?
MATH
I AGREE! SO WHAT DO THE GOVERNORS RECOMMEND?
EL PASO! ISN'T THAT WHAT YOU'D TRY IF THE RUNNING GAME ISN'T WORKING?
GEOGRAPHY
MATH
WE'D LIKE YOU TO GIVE US MORE MONEY TO PUT INTO OUR FACTORY-LIKE PRESCHOOLS!
PUBLIC SCHOOL
ZZZZ
SCIENCE
GEOGRAPHY
COLORADO SPRINGS GAZETTE TELEGRAPH

The paranoia on this front is fed by those who fault public-school choice plans for not "going all the way" to privatization. Besides self-interested private-school partisans, this is heard from some free-market types and libertarians, and from a few serious social scientists, perhaps most notably Myron Lieberman, John Chubb, Terry Moe, and James Coleman. They contend that private schools are inherently more effective than public schools, not just because they have better students but also because their organizational incentives and dynamics cause them to function better. These are important considerations, and it is not hard to understand why they would make public-school people nervous, thus nourishing the Monster theory.

2. *Protective Paternalism for the Poor.* This holds that, however attractive choice may be from the standpoint of educated middle-class families, it is bound to work against the interests of poor and minority youngsters whose families are too disorganized to make and execute complex decisions of this kind. Hence these youngsters will get left behind in deteriorating schools that are forsaken by upwardly mobile and education-minded families who formerly had some stake in them. With the best students and most energetic parents "creamed off" into schools of choice, the schools-left-behind will further deteriorate.

3. *Chaos and Impoverishment.* Choice policies make it harder to run schools from year to year, and exceptionally difficult to improve bad schools, because of the uncertainties that choice creates for school administrators and planners and, perhaps more profoundly, because exiting students sap resources from a school.

4. *The Preposterous Panacea.* This criticism, the only one that I think half-reasonable, is that choice is no cure-all for what ails American education and that its promoters may be misleading people into thinking it a total solution, rather than one element of a policy package. (Other essential elements include high standards, a sufficiency of learning time, expert teachers, and a reliable feedback and accountability system.)

The four arguments sketched above have been visible and audible in the recent writings, speeches, and resolutions of an array of influential people and groups. [See box, page 32.] And they are having an impact. More state legislatures have rejected (or deferred) choice in 1989 than embraced it.

Some of what we are observing is simply the labor pains that accompany the birth of any major public policy. On some lips we hear an attitude more akin to wariness than outright hostility. From others we hear voiced what I have already acknowledged to be a fair point, namely that choice alone will not do the entire job.

But even this *legitimate* caution needs to be watched vigilantly, lest the idea of choice be buried under policies favored by the establishment, or forced to meet so many terms and conditions that it loses all its force. Choice is no cure-all. But the dynamics that it introduces into the education system are apt to cause a lot of other changes to be made faster than if it is held hostage to those other changes happening first.

As for the other three arguments, the Monster of Privatization need not follow from public-school choice. When you get right down to it, public-school choice may even turn out to be bad for American private education. The canny Albert Shanker has figured this out, and that appears to be part of the reason for his partial acceptance of public-school choice.

The paternalists' contention that the poor cannot make wise choices is deeply condescending, if not actually racist. Yes, the effective exercise of informed choice requires access to information and some ability to process and act upon that information. But if we believe that most parents want their children to have a good education, then it is simply a matter of getting them information they can understand, and perhaps some friendly help in interpreting that information. Poor people can make choices, too. Those with doubts should consider the experience of Local District 4 in the East Harlem section of New York City. (See "The Week," *NR*, Sept. 1.) Here was a school system attended mostly by youngsters as disadvantaged and "at

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Voices Against Choice

■ "Choices at the local level can improve the education available, but state-mandated choice programs have the potential for dismantling the U.S.A.'s public-education system. Experience reinforces our belief: State-mandated programs are unequal, unfair, unfeasible, and incompatible with quality education."—Mary Hatwood Futrell, former President, National Education Association, July 10, 1989.

■ "I view choice as a diversion away from programs that have already succeeded. . . . Most of the children left behind will be at risk. . . . I don't see how the better schools are going to improve either."—Augustus F. Hawkins, Chairman, House Committee on Education and Labor, February 16, 1989.

■ "Schools are the one place in society where every child has a chance for an equal start. Admittedly, some starts now are more equal than others, but a choice system will simply aggravate the unevenness. . . . It is a bald fact of life that the families most committed to good schools are the families most likely to bail out of a mediocre system."—Scott D. Thomson, Executive Director, National Association of Secondary School Principals, April 19, 1989.

■ "[T]his approach is tantamount to a declaration of war . . . on some public-school systems serving thousands of students. . . . Ultimately, the state will have islands of education excellence surrounded by vast wastelands of deprivation. . . . At best, choice offers little promise for school improvement. At worst, unrestricted choice could dash all hope for equal education opportunity for students. . . . After parents become accustomed to choice—and when they become dissatisfied with public schools—choice advocates will advance public funding for private schools as a remedy."—Lewis W. Finch, superintendent, Anoka-Hennepin School District, Coon Rapids, Minnesota, July 1989.

■ Choice "has the potential for being the most devastating issue that we as black people have ever had to deal with. . . . I am not optimistic at all that the poor black child will benefit at all from what we call 'choice.'"—Al Tony Gilmore, National Education Association, June 1989.

■ "[S]chool choice has, by and large, become a new improved method of student sorting, in which schools pick and choose among students. In this sorting process, black and Hispanic students, low-income students, students with low achievement, students with absence and behavior problems, handicapped students, and limited English proficient students have very limited opportunities to participate. . . . In these school systems, loosely implemented choice programs have become a new form of segregation. . . ."—Donald R. Moore & Suzanne Davenport, February 1989. —CEF

risk" as any in the land. If they and their parents have been able to thrive—and their schools to improve—under the principle of choice, so can others.

As for the poor being left behind while more fortunate students are siphoned off into schools of choice, this concern invites the most straightforward remedy: if all schools become schools of choice and all students are afforded the opportunity to select among them, nobody is excluded from the choice system. The teachers know that choice will benefit minority students in particular. Almost two-thirds of them said as much in a recent Harris survey.

Finally, the prospect that choice will disrupt the orderly management of school systems invites the rhetorical response that bad schools introduce a far more vexing form of chaos into the lives of youngsters imprisoned in them. Schools exist for the educational benefit of their students, not for the managerial convenience of those running them.

The policy of choice will indeed leave some schools with reduced resources as they lose students. Others will find themselves with more resources—and pupils—than they can absorb. This may mean that small schools must merge, diversify, or offer markedly different products in order to attract customers. Schools that are excessively popular, on the other hand, may find themselves opening branches, taking over other schools, and so forth. One can visualize a scenario in which a school that practically nobody wants to attend will shut down, only to reopen under the wing of a highly popular school that cannot accommodate all who want to study in it.

Such a prospect is predictably unsettling to educators accustomed to an orderly and predictable world in which they, rather than their customers, make the key decisions. And that, finally, is what I think the backlash is all about. Choice augurs a rearrangement of power and authority relationships in American education, and the farther-reaching and more comprehensive the choice policy, the more total the reallocation of power.

CHOICE, then, is part and parcel of the reassertion of "civilian control" over the system, which history is likely to judge the premier education reform of the 1980s. And *statewide* choice policies reduce the control of educators even more dramatically, because such programs are so sweeping in scope, because they show how little we really need the vast bureaucratic layer called the "local education system," and because the decision to embrace this policy has (to date) been made by elected legislators rather than by professional educators. Statewide choice signifies almost as large a shift as one can imagine in the hoary ground-rules of the public-education system.

Let us not forget why we have schools or who is supposed to benefit from them. Let the educators by all means proffer their best professional advice, indicate their preferences, and spell out their interests. But let them not determine the basic dynamics by which the enterprise is run. It is as close as one can come to a public-policy sin, I believe, to confine a pupil against his and his parents' will in a wretched school that he would never willingly attend. It is for the students' sake that we created an education system in the first place. It must be for their benefit that we shape the policies by which the system operates. □

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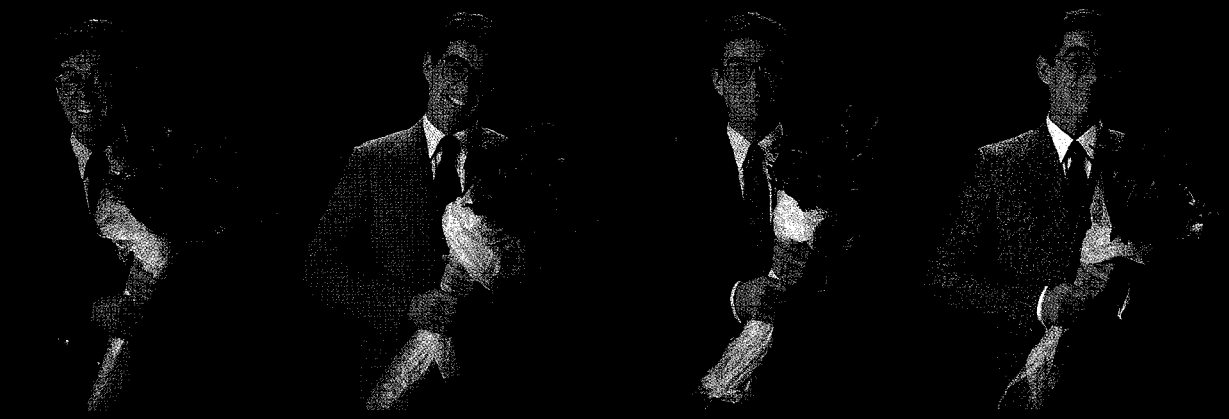

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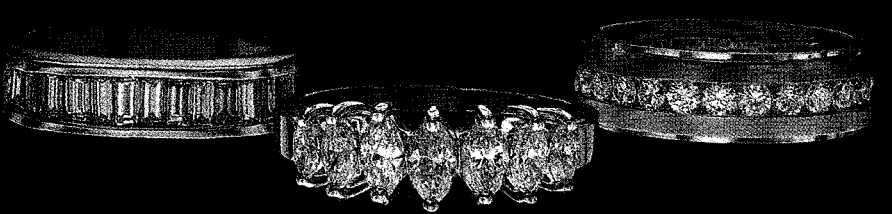

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CALIFORNIA DREAMING

Golden State Opportunity

Who controls the U.S. Congress after 1992 may depend on what happens in California's gubernatorial race next year. And what happens there will turn on the tensions between civic virtue and the 'compassionate' state.

TOM BETHELL

SAN FRANCISCO—Set against the sycamore trees in the Civic Center Plaza there was a wino encampment. Disheveled men lay about wrapped in dirty blankets. "San Francisco is a great city to be homeless at because they'll take care of you," a black policeman told me as he climbed onto his motorcycle. "Give you a meal anytime. They come here from all over the world."

A visitor from a distant land might nonetheless conclude that civic pride was not among the city's virtues. In fact, the values of the regnant liberal culture (epitomized by the word "compassion") are in direct conflict with civic virtue as traditionally understood—that is the problem. From down the street leaflets were blowing and loudspeakers were echoing. You could hear the sound that all Americans have come to recognize over the last quarter-century—the angry cawing of left-wing demonstrators, their harangues reverberating off nearby buildings.

I picked up a lime-green leaflet that had fluttered to my feet: "Free Abortion on Demand!" it announced. "Full Medi-Cal Funding for Abortion!" The rally was being held outside the state building on Van Ness Street. Among the endorsing organizations (according to the leaflet) were the Freedom Socialist Party, the Marxist Leninist Party, Women against Imperialism, Radical Women, the Revolutionary Workers League, and about a dozen more, all of them *de facto* members of the Democrats' coalition of the aggrieved and the alienated. It's worth noting that no leftward limits are placed on the Democratic alliance. But let a Republican candidate be connected, ever so tenuously, with a comedian who tells a non-approved joke, and newsrooms will go on full alert as quickly as the Pentagon War Room detecting an unexpected radar blip.

It's revealing that the following comments by California's leading abortionist, Dr. Edward Allred of Los Angeles (reported by the *San Diego Union*), should have received so little attention: "When a sullen black woman of 17 or 18 can decide to have a baby and get welfare and food stamps and become a burden to us all, it's time to stop. In parts of south Los Angeles, having babies for welfare is the only industry the people have." And this: "Population control is too important to be stopped by some right-wing pro-life types. Take the influx of Hispanic immigrants. Their lack of respect for democracy and social order is frightening. I hope I can do something to stem that tide. I'd set up a clinic in Mexico for free if I could."

Right-wing rhetoric attracts little attention as long as it is used, as here, in the service of a liberal cause. Truly, the pro-abortion coalition is a peculiar one. According to one report, 43 per cent of all abortions in the U.S. are performed on black women, and 62 per cent of blacks think that abortion should be illegal under all circumstances. Yet Jesse Jackson has compared those who participate in Operation Rescue sit-ins to "the segregationists who fought desperately to block black Americans from access to their rights."

A FEW DAYS AFTER the pro-abortion demonstration Beatrice Smalley drove me in the chilly evening sunshine to San Francisco's Sunset district, where a pro-life group was holding a minor meeting. A housewife with five children, Mrs. Smalley earlier this year served 47 days in the Elmwood Rehabilitation Center in Milpitas, California, after being arrested at an Operation Rescue in Silicon Valley. Together with 15 other men and women, she refused to give her name to the court authorities, identifying herself only as "Baby Jane Doe." As we drove to the meeting she recalled the tedium of prison life—the difficulty of obtaining reading material, the television sets droning on noisily into the night, the once-a-week outdoor exercise. Like some others connected with Operation Rescue, she seemed somewhat disheartened, not by her prison experience but by the scarcity of new recruits, and by the way in which police brutality against rescuers has been ignored by groups that would reliably deplore it if abortion were not the issue.

After the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in the *Webster*

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case, giving states more power to regulate abortion, Sacramento has in any event become the center of abortion attention in the state. Here also the picture is not encouraging for the pro-lifers. The question in California is not whether abortion will remain legal but whether its subsidy will remain mandatory. It is startling to discover how far California is to the left of the country as a whole on abortion. About three hundred thousand abortions are carried out annually in the state, eighty thousand of them subsidized by Medi-Cal funds. In 1981, a California Supreme Court decision held not merely that abortion is a constitutional right, but that the state's failure to fund abortion (if it also funds childbirth) would infringe on that right. In 1986, Rose Bird and two other liberal Supreme Court justices were recalled by California voters (overwhelmingly because of their opposition to the death penalty), and three new justices were appointed by the Republican governor, George Deukmejian. But to date the old interpretation of the law still stands. State funds pay for many abortions, and the state Assembly is powerless to do anything about it. Pro-lifers in Sacramento point out that all five Deukmejian appointees to the Court are up for reconfirmation by the voters next year.

AT THE END OF 1990 Governor Deukmejian will retire from politics (to earn more money, it is said), and everyone agrees that next year's governor's race is critical, both for the state and for national politics. Despite the best efforts of the abortionists, California's population is increasing at the rate of five hundred thousand a year. The state may have as many as seven new congressmen after the 1990 census. Redistricting will determine whether these new seats are more likely to be Republican or Democratic. After 1980, redistricting was the occasion for crude gerrymandering by the Democratic-controlled Assembly, but this could not have happened without the cooperation of the governor's office, then occupied by Jerry Brown. Next year's gubernatorial election, in fact, could produce a ten-seat shift in Congress.

Representative Tom Campbell, a moderately conservative Republican who taught at Stanford University before winning the 12th District seat in 1988, explains it this way: As a result of Representative Phillip Burton's gerrymander following the 1980 census (when California gained two seats), the congressional balance in the state went from a 22–21 Democratic edge to a 28–17 Democratic lead. "Assume that the state is evenly divided between Republican and Democratic voters," Campbell said (which it approximately is); "assume further that in 1990 we get non-partisan districting and seven new seats; the new California delegation could be evenly divided: 26–26. But if it is again gerrymandered, the Democrats might win, say, 31 of the 52 seats."

The leading gubernatorial contenders are, on the Republican side, Senator Pete Wilson (who is thought to have the nomination all but locked up) and, on the Democratic side, Diane Feinstein, the former mayor of San Francisco, and state Attorney General John Van de Kamp. There are indications that the leftward tropism that hurts the Democrats nationally will do so again in California. "To raise money you have to appeal to the activists," said Ken Khachigian, a California attorney who was a speechwriter for Presidents Nixon and Reagan. That means the Hollywood and West Los Angeles liberals. "They demand that their candidates be on the left." Van de Kamp firmly opposes the death penalty—the issue that brought down Rose Bird & Co. This stance could help Van de Kamp in the Democratic primary but ensure his defeat by Wilson next November. In any event Wilson is currently favored, although Republicans are slightly uneasy about Miss Feinstein, who takes a tougher "law and order" line than Van de Kamp. But even Democratic Senator Alan Cranston says that Wilson now "has the edge." (The race for state treasurer, the position held by Jesse Unruh, will probably pit Jerry Brown's sister, Kathleen, against Patrick Buchanan's sister, Bay.)

All the leading gubernatorial candidates are "pro-choice." Last June Pete Wilson wrote to Kate Michelman, the executive director of the National Abortion Rights Action League, expressing "concern" that she had claimed he was "on all sides of the abortion issue."

"This is simply not true," he wrote her. "My position in abortion-related issues has been clear and consistent," he said, characterizing himself as an "opponent of legislative efforts to restrict or deny a woman the right to choose to have an abortion," and a "strong supporter and co-sponsor of legislation to reauthorize our nation's family-planning laws."

Pete Wilson has been in the forefront of recent Republican efforts in California to attract the homosexual vote—or at least not to drive it into the Democratic column.

Pete Wilson has also been in the forefront of recent Republican efforts in California to attract the homosexual vote—or at least not to drive it into the Democratic column. "Working behind the scenes" at the State Republican convention in Anaheim, the *San Francisco Chronicle* reported in September, "Wilson and other party leaders made sure that several anti-gay resolutions sponsored by [Representative William] Dannemeyer and others were killed in committee." Both Wilson and Governor Deukmejian held press conferences condemning attempts to "drum homosexuals out of the party," the paper reported. Senator Wilson defended the homosexuals' "right to political participation." He has been joined by Republican National Committee Chairman Lee Atwater, who recently opposed attempts by the state party to pass anti-gay resolutions. "There is no place for bigotry," Atwater explained at a GOP event in the state. Representative Robert K. Dornan may have undermined this "outreach" effort when he commented that "the AIDS plague is going to make [Atwater] sorry he ever said anything about sodomy clubs being part of the Republican politics of inclusion."

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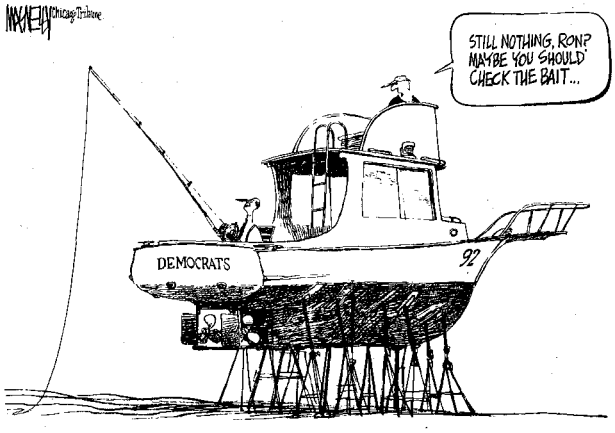
My sense is that a fair number of homosexuals in the state may well be looking for an excuse to vote Republican. I discussed this further with Marty Keller, the chairman of the Log Cabin Club, a statewide gay Republican group, at the Telegraph Hill apartment of Scott King, a venture capitalist who is helping to underwrite the search for a bio-engineered cure for diabetes. Their message was that homosexuals are intrinsically more favorably disposed toward libertarianism than socialism, but that, in a pinch, gay-protecting Democratic socialism would have to be preferred to gay-bashing Republican libertarianism. Their hope was that Laguna Beach would prove to be the trend-setter: it votes strongly Republican and is home to lots of gays—proportionately, probably about the same as San Francisco.

"In San Francisco," Scott King said, "it's easier socially to be gay than it is to be a Republican." Marty Keller was much in favor of San Francisco's proposed "domestic partners" legislation, which could end up saddling taxpayers with the medical bills of a fair number of the city's homosexuals (12 per cent of San Francisco's voters, according to King). The proposal now awaits a voter referendum in November. Probably it will pass. The proposed law, Keller said, simply permits people to register as domestic partners, paying a $35 fee, and grants them mutual hospital visitation rights. When I said that could be just the thin end of the wedge, Keller said, "Let's hope so."



San Francisco's population is currently declining by about five thousand a year, but this has little to do with AIDS (which killed about nine hundred San Franciscans in 1988). Births in the city have comfortably exceeded deaths throughout the 1980s. The city's Oriental population has been growing rapidly, and may now be up to one-third of the total. Chinatown, once crammed in next to the downtown business district, now sprawls westward down Geary Boulevard and never seems to end. The problem with San Francisco is its punitive anti-business climate. Chinese with strong family ties and kids working off the books can cope—indeed flourish. But for conventional businesses above a certain size, it's a good city to move out of. Many do just that. Despite rent control (with vacancy decontrol), there is a growing number of "Apartment for Rent" signs visible all over the city. Urged on by homosexuals, decidedly non-libertarian in this instance, the board of supervisors is now contemplating vacancy control, despite the bad experience that Berkeley has already had with this attack on property rights. Perhaps, in the end, the Chinese will rescue San Francisco by becoming more involved in politics, but as of now they show little sign of doing so.

Within the space of a day, I spoke to two people who had encountered unexpected insurance problems in California—an apparently unbusinesslike reluctance on the part of insurance companies to renew policies. As the state Department of Insurance happened to be holding hearings then, I decided to attend. It soon became clear what had caused the problem. Last November the voters narrowly passed a ballot initiative called Proposition 103, supported by Ralph Nader and calling for a rollback of most insurance premiums to 20 per cent below the rates in effect on November 8, 1987, with any future rate increases to be strictly regulated. This was immediately appealed to the California Supreme Court, which in May ruled, in effect, that the rate rollbacks could not be implemented if they would deprive a company of the chance to earn a "fair rate of return."

Nader's agent, Harvey Rosenfield, was holding a press conference in which he grumbled about the slow pace of change. Premiums still had not been rolled back! He denounced the Insurance Department hearings as a "taxpayer-subsidized terror show," *en passant* deploring no-fault insurance (one solution to the high cost of automobile insurance that is not welcomed by Nader's brigade of lawyers). A large number of insurance agents were standing about in the hallway listening to the press conference. Several agents told me that after Proposition 103 passed a number of companies (including Travelers) talked about leaving the state. But after the Supreme Court ruling, they were now reconsidering. The reason for the change of heart is that the dynamics of regulation will almost certainly transform the *right* to a fair rate of return into a *guaranteed* rate of return. And so the market will probably become cartelized, with existing market shares frozen in perpetuity. "It is very important for consumers to understand," Insurance Commissioner Roxani Gillespie said at the hearing, "that we are in a critical transition period in California as we shift from a market-driven system to one of rate regulation."

The Department of Insurance will gain power, the companies will gain security and lose efficiency, the customers will be saddled with higher rates, and Ralph Nader will no doubt applaud the disappearance of one more market. "Why not simply deregulate the industry?" I asked Rosenfield at the end of the press conference.

"Can't answer that now," he said. "Too complex." One or two of the insurance agents gave me a worried look. Maybe in a deregulated market they would have to go back out and pound the pavements in search of new customers.

THE FOG was beginning to settle in, so the next day I drove south in search of sunshine and stopped off at the Stanford campus. Two co-eds walked by and one was saying to the other: "So she goes, 'I want you to raise your hand if you have never had a prejudiced thought in your life.' So Mary says, 'Well, I'm sure I've had a prejudiced thought, but I'm not sure what it is right now.'" Some kind of institutional-racism campus-awareness program, apparently. But this brings us to the topic of higher education, and perhaps I had better leave that for another time. □

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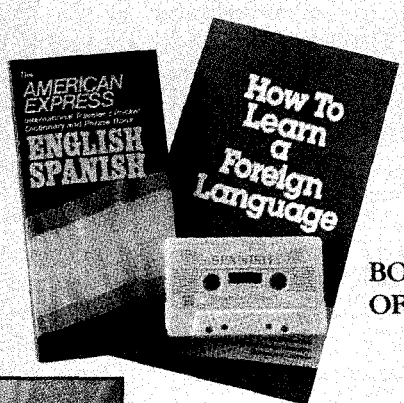

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SHIFTING PARADIGMS

Is the Cold War Really Over?

That depends, first of all, on what we mean by 'the cold war.' But even if our answer turns out to be yes, the next question is: What then?

OWEN HARRIES

THEY USED to call it a "conceptual framework" or a "model," but these days Thomas Kuhn's fancier term "paradigm" is gaining ground. Whatever we decide to call it, it is pretty clear by now that the one that has served us well for the last forty years, giving us a more or less agreed-upon way of explaining the world and ordering priorities, is breaking down. The old truths are losing their compelling power and their audience, and there is a groping for new organizing principles.

Evidence of this groping is all around us. Hardly a day passes without some deep thinker holding forth about "the end of the cold war" or "the death of Communism." We are assured that with the emergence of Japan and the approach of 1992 we are heading toward an era of "multipolarity." After a shaky start about two decades ago, "interdependence" is making a vigorous comeback, once again accompanied by the claim that it makes war obsolescent if not entirely obsolete.

None of the ideas encompassed by these terms and claims is new, but there is no denying that they now have more going for them than they did earlier. They carry more resonance and conviction because they appear to bear a relationship to actual events, particularly but not exclusively in the Communist world, that they previously lacked. What precisely that relationship is, however, and how well this conceptual apparatus will serve to describe what we are moving toward are far from clear. Many of the key terms remain loose and vague.

Take, as a conspicuous and crucial example, "the end of the cold war." The cold war has been *the* defining fact of the last forty years, so if clarity and precision are required anywhere it is here. Yet so far these qualities have been singularly lacking in the discussion.

Contemplating the cold war over the years one might conclude that it had three distinctive characteristics: marked bipolarity, a high ideological charge, and global scope. First, it was essentially a contest between the United States and the Soviet Union, with most of the other significant actors organized into one or the other of the two blocs led and dominated (in very different ways, of course) by the superpowers. Second, both sides saw the conflict not in terms of conventional interests, but as a war to the death between competing philosophies and visions of the future: liberal democracy, capitalism, and the Judaeo-Christian tradition set against the Marxist–Leninist version of socialism. And, third, the struggle was conducted not merely in areas where one or the other of the antagonists had traditional, clearly identifiable interests, but pretty well anywhere and everywhere—in every "nook and cranny," as Kennan had predicted right at the beginning of the cold war. Often it was not a case of competing interests generating conflict in a particular part of the world, but of conflict generating interests where previously none had existed.

IF THESE are accepted as the defining features of the cold war, then indeed it is coming to an end. The emergence of new power centers (particularly Western Europe and Japan) and the diminishing dominance of the superpowers (gradual in the case of the United States, rapid in the case of the Soviet Union) spell the eventual demise of the old, all-inclusive bipolarity.

Faced with economic collapse, the Soviet leaders have for all intents and purposes given up the ideological struggle. Domestically they speak the language of pluralism, incentives, and democratization. Internationally they have virtually abandoned the Brezhnev doctrine ("Once Communist, always Communist") and, even more significantly, have retreated from the basic doctrine of international class struggle—the doctrine that gave rise to the cold war in the first place. Outside a few intellectually pathetic enclaves, no one in the world now believes that Marxism–Leninism represents either a plausible or an acceptable vision of the future. On the other hand, liberal

Mr. Harries is the editor of The National Interest.

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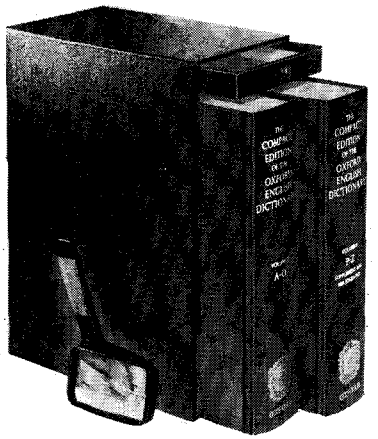

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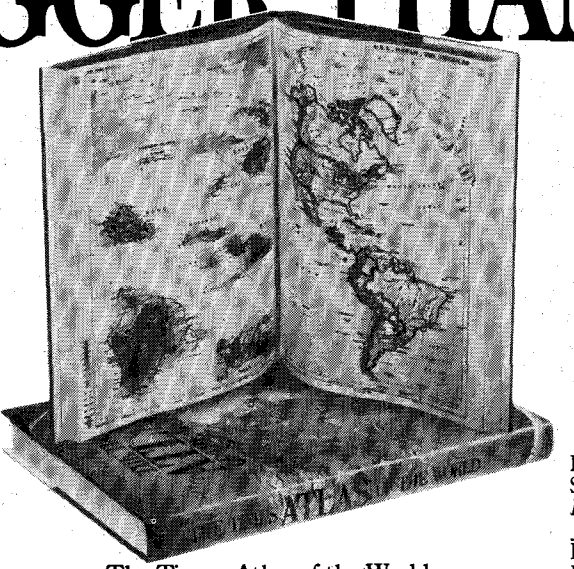

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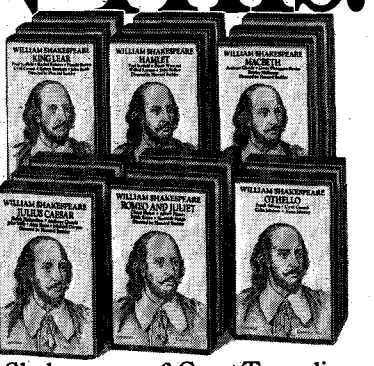

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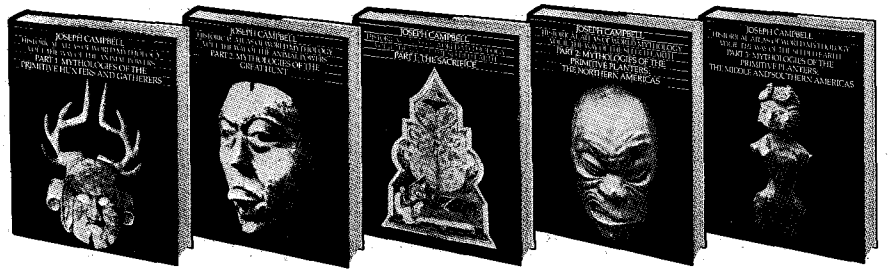

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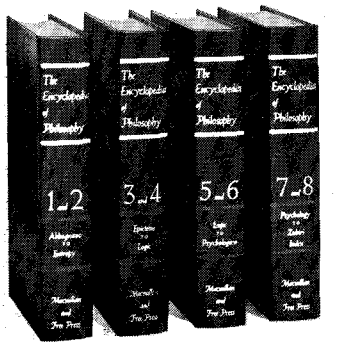

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democracy is riding high after nearly half a century of virtually uninterrupted success, particularly in producing material wealth. As things stand, those like Francis Fukuyama who celebrate the triumph of liberal democracy seem fully justified. (Though questions remain: To what extent is this triumph conditional on continuing to deliver the goods? What would be the ideological consequence if the international economic system should ever break down badly?)

As for continuing to conduct their competition on a global scale, it seems evident that the will and capacity for doing so with the earlier abandon have declined substantially on both sides. On the American side, the lauding of the Grenadian operation as a major event provided the most decisive evidence of diminished seriousness; as for the Soviets, the physical withdrawal from Afghanistan, the winding up of the Angolan venture, the encouraging of the Vietnamese withdrawal from Cambodia, and the new language used toward Cuba collectively indicate an ebbing tide, even allowing for the elements of ambiguity that attach to some of these steps. Global activity will continue on both sides but under greater constraints—with the United States particularly sensitive to the possible loss of American lives (and therefore more inclined to resort to proxies) and the Soviet Union to economic costs (and therefore more likely to concentrate on low-cost ventures where a modest outlay may bring results).

"Can't you see that if we don't use those bombs it's all a waste of money?"

All this having been said, however, there is another way of looking at the cold war, one that focuses on its origins and the central balance rather than on its subsequent history and proliferation. The cold war began with the division of Europe, and Europe is still divided and likely to remain so for some time to come. The two superpowers still confront each other with massive force on the Central European front; and, ideology apart, each has a vital strategic interest in preventing the other from prevailing in Europe. Things may change, of course, but as long as this state of affairs remains, and whatever happens in other respects, can it really be said that the cold war is ending? Or does it make more sense, rather, to say that it is changing its form and character, and that the essential conditions that caused and sustained it remain in being? These are the kinds of questions that should be considered carefully before declaring a position on "the end of the cold war."

For most of those who have already concluded that the cold war is, indeed, either over or about to be, the key term is "multipolarity." What was essentially a two-actor system will, we are told, be replaced soon by one with five or six major players, with Western Europe, Japan, China, and possibly even India joining the United States and the Soviet Union. The result, it is maintained, will be that the static, positional, and essentially simple game with which we have grown familiar will be replaced by something much more complex and volatile. There will be many more possible permutations and much more room (and need) for maneuver. Alliances will fluctuate, and fleetness of foot, adroitness, and flexibility will replace steadfastness and solidarity as the conditions for success. In short, it is claimed that we are destined to return to something like the "classical" power political systems of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

THERE IS some truth in all this, but it is considerably overdrawn. It makes the common intellectual error of overemphasizing what is novel and innovative in a situation and playing down what is familiar, established, and likely to persist. While the increasing weight of some of the new actors is real enough, so is the continuing military and political superiority—and rivalry—of the two superpowers; and, call it cold war or not, these latter features are going to be a crucial part of the international scene for a long time to come. What is most likely to happen, therefore, is not a simple *displacement* of bipolarity by multipolarity but the grafting of one onto the other. There will be a mixed system, bipolar in some respects and on some occasions (particularly those in which military power looms large) and multipolar in others, with the boundaries between the two imperfectly understood and differently interpreted. This will mean confusion and uncertainty—regarding roles, appropriate modes of behavior, relationships, expectations, obligations, and so on—and that in turn will give ample scope for feelings of mistrust, resentment, and betrayal. It will not be a very comfortable system to live with, and there will be times when the old certitudes of the cold war will be sorely missed.

There is a variant on the back-to-the-nineteenth-century scenario, one represented by the term "interdependence." According to this variant, there will be multipolarity, but multipolarity with a difference. The interests of the major actors will be so intertwined and mutually dependent, there will be such a fine and intricate mesh of relationships, that states will not be able, as a matter of self-interest, to behave in the way that their earlier counterparts did. Common or overlapping economic, environmental, ecological, demographic, and other interests will require—indeed demand—cooperation and, together with the terrible destructive force of modern weapons, will serve to rule out war as a rational instrument for the achieving of goals. The efficacy of military power therefore is destined to decline. Sometimes this view of the future is reinforced by the assumptions that all major countries are moving toward liberal democracy (the "democratic revolution"), and that—as the record shows—democracies do not go to war with each other.

I said earlier that the interdependence thesis was making a recovery after a premature popularity about two decades ago. But really it is much older than that. It was, for example, the central argument of Sir Norman Angell's

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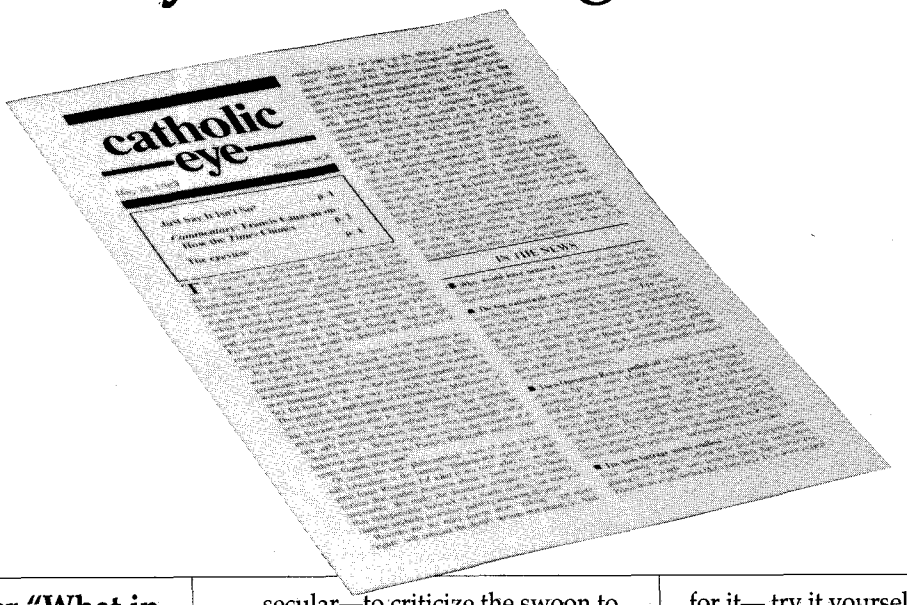

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How to End the Cold War

THE QUESTION most often asked is, "Do you hope Gorbachev will succeed?" The formulation that, typically, follows is, "Do you *think* Gorbachev will succeed?"

It is illuminating to organize one's mind to answer these questions by contemplating what it is we do not want. Clearly, what we don't want is an economically reconstituted Soviet Union braced to renew its seventy-year offensive against the free world. The evidence is great that, finally, the Marxist–Leninist afflatus which commanded the Soviet Union, arm in arm with history, to spearhead a drive against the free world is intellectually and spiritually dead. Although we recognize the abundant signs of an exhausted historical imperative, we know also that there are theaters in the world in which activity goes forward of exactly the same character as went forward under the leadership of Josef Stalin and Nikita Khrushchev and Leonid Brezhnev. That Mikhail Gorbachev has tacitly renounced his own pledge to Communize the world, even though it was reiterated as recently as in 1988, is meaningless to Cubans, Nicaraguans, Vietnamese, Ethiopians, and Angolans who feel the iron of the Soviet boot; and, indeed, not yet of much importance to Bulgarians, Czechoslovakians, or Rumanians.

We do not know whether the sound of the Marxist tocsin is completely dead, and we certainly don't know whether historical Russian expansionism is dying with the twentieth century. We do know one thing of salient importance.

It is that the Soviet Union is in dire economic straits. Last June, the deputy prime minister, who serves directly under Mr. Gorbachev, addressed a meeting of his fellow economists and declared flatly that the Soviet Union as currently constituted had two years left to live; that if economic reforms had not by then taken hold, anything might happen. Specifically, Mr. Leonid Abalkin mentioned the possibility of a "rightward swing," by which is meant, in Soviet terminology, a Stalinist swing.

Professor Richard Pipes of Harvard, the distinguished historian who has just completed a monumental work on Russia, advances the interesting point that Gorbachev's immunity derives largely from the recognition by all conceivable alternative rulers of the Soviet Union that were they to take power, they would end by being powerless themselves. The shortage of housing and food and medicine and basic materials is not something that can be remedied by any change in leadership or by any fresh dogmatical brew. There is only one thing that can save the Soviet Union economically, and that is: hard currency.

In 1988, the Soviet Union spent, in constant dollars, 3 per cent more than it had ever spent before on its armament industry. We know that today, even after the INF treaty, the Soviets are more powerful as a nuclear nation than ever they were before. And of course we know that the strength of their conventional forces outweighs that which NATO commands by roughly two and one-half to one.

I would propose a purchase, by the United States, of (non-replenishable) Soviet military equipment, nuclear and non-nuclear, of $100 billion per year for the next three years. A carefully tabulated catalogue of Soviet military hardware should be compiled calculating that which is redundant to a purely defensive conventional force and a deterrent nuclear force. The missiles and warheads and tanks and submarines and armed carriers would file out of Soviet ports onto U.S. shipping and, upon reaching the continental shelf, be jettisoned into the sea.

Three years of such activity would accomplish two goals. The first is the economic rejuvenation of the Soviet Union, with the huge capital investment of $300 billion. The second is the destruction of that incremental inventory of Soviet weapons that endangers peace on earth. The financing of the enterprise would be done by reducing our own military budget by $100 billion per year for three years, which under these special circumstances we could most certainly afford to do.

I don't deny that the proposal is complicated in detail, but it is simple in conception. The outcry that the Soviet Union would never consent to such an arrangement leaves it for us to say only that it is not inconceivable, given the pressures on the Soviet economy. To which we add: If the Soviet Union refuses the exchange, we will have learned much that is useful for us to know. Indeed, much that is vital for us to know.

—WM. F. BUCKLEY JR.

famous and influential book, *The Great Illusion*, which sought to demonstrate the futility and irrationality, if not the impossibility, of war in a modern, capitalist world. Unfortunately for Sir Norman, four years after the publication of the book in 1910 the great powers thought otherwise and engaged in the most bloody war in human history (which did not prevent his being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1933). And a generation later they emphasized the point by doing it again. Moreover, both wars broke out in Europe, the most capitalistic and interdependent part of the international system.

Present-day exponents of the interdependence theory may of course argue that that was then and this is now, and that the level and complexity of mutual dependence today is much greater than it was in 1914 or 1939. In other words, Angell was not wrong but merely premature by seven or eight decades. To this there are two counter-arguments. First, as there can be no test other than whether, at a time of acute crisis, countries actually do resort to force, to declare that any given level of interdependence rules out war is mere assertion. In 1910, Angell believed that the unprecedented level of interdependence then existing was enough to do the trick; he was wrong. In 1989, others believe that the necessary level now at last has been reached: but how can anyone possibly tell until the test comes?

The second objection is more fundamental: Angell was not merely premature but dead wrong. The level of economic interdependence is not the decisive consideration because economic gain is not the principal motivation that drives countries to war. *In extremis*, the passions generated by nationalism, religion, and ideology, the

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ambitions, fears, and vanities of leaders, and the political and strategic calculations necessary in an anarchic state system outweigh considerations of economic gain and loss. If they did not, Angell would have been right in 1914: for even then there was enough economic interdependence for war not to "pay" those who initiated it.

ODDLY ENOUGH, for other purposes some of the most enthusiastic advocates of the interdependence thesis recognize that the policies of states are not dominated by economic calculations. For these same people emphasize the deadly danger of the "arms race" and the urgent need to "relax tensions" and promote "confidence-building" measures. In doing so, they tacitly concede that the existence of interdependence does not ensure peace; all their claim amounts to is that it *would* do so, if world leaders could be persuaded to share their scale of priorities. But this leaves us pretty much where we were before: it is true but question-begging.

Look at it another way: the most interdependent social organization ever entered into by human beings is the family. It is also the most dangerous, the setting for most murders. As the criminologist Norval Morris put it a few years ago: "You are safer on the streets than at home; safer with a stranger than with a friend or relative." With the current drug wars, this may not be true just now in a place like Washington. But the general point still stands: If interdependence does not prevent regular mayhem in families, why should it be assumed that it will do so among states?

As for the additional claim that more and more countries are turning to democracy and democracies don't fight each other, both parts of it are of dubious validity. First, the so-called "democratic revolution" has more to do with the needs of some American conservatives than with what is really happening in the world, and it involves some very questionable arithmetic. The numbers are bumped up by counting as viable democracies Latin American and other countries that happen to have elected civilian governments at the moment. But as little has changed in the social structures and political cultures of those countries, and as those structures and cultures have regularly thrown up dictatorships in the past, surely their present governments are best understood as part of cyclical patterns rather than evidence of lasting change. Similarly, and as recent events in China have underscored, it is wildly optimistic to assume that what is happening in the Communist world presages the emergence of viable democracies any time soon.

The second part of the claim—democracies do not go to war with each other—has some validity as an historical generalization, but this may be better explained by special circumstances than by the intrinsic nature of democratic states. Until the end of the nineteenth century, democratic states did repeatedly threaten each other with force. It happened during the Venezuelan crisis (1895) between Great Britain and the United States, and again during the Fashoda crisis (1898), which involved France and Great Britain. After that, the rising Anglo-German rivalry led to the reorientation of British strategy; what the course of Anglo-American and Anglo-French relations would have been in the absence of the German threat it is impossible to say. Since the 1930s, the presence of powerful and predatory totalitarian states has caused rivalries among democracies to be displaced by more fundamental threats.

In any case the claim that democracies do not go to war with each other has a limited predictive value because until recently virtually all functioning democracies were Anglo-Saxon or Nordic (with France being the major exception), and Christian. It may be less the case that democracy made these countries peaceful toward each other than that the same features that facilitated the growth of democracy also discouraged warlike behavior. If so, this may not hold true for other political cultures. In the case of plebiscitary democracies, or when popular government comes to countries with revanchist ambitions, or "winner takes all" traditions, or serious and insoluble internal problems, or violently intolerant religions, it may be a very different story.

A MORE PARTICULAR cause for skepticism about the belief in the declining efficacy of force arises when one contemplates the likely future predicament of the Soviet Union. By almost universal consent (including, apparently, that of some Soviet leaders) the likelihood of success in the efforts to convert the Soviet economy—indeed, the whole society—into an efficient, modern one is not particularly good, to put it mildly. There is a strong probability that the Soviet Union will lose ground and decline in the international pecking-order over the next decades. But at the same time it will remain in possession of an enormously powerful military machine. In these circumstances, is it likely that the Soviet regime will decide not to exploit its one comparative advantage and accept decline gradually? Or is it more likely to rage against the dying of the light? Further, if things go the other way and Gorbachev's reform efforts succeed, are we not more likely to be left with an efficient and ambitious authoritarian state than with one that is democratic and reconciled to the status quo?

To criticize some of the concepts now coming into vogue is not to deny that great changes are in train in the world, or that some of those changes present a serious challenge to deeply entrenched assumptions and modes of thought. To take but one example, events in the Soviet Union over the last five years, which have taken everyone by surprise, surely call into question the validity and predictive usefulness of the model of totalitarianism used by many of us over the years. Sheer intellectual self-respect requires more than an obstinate attempt to make all the evidence fit into the old categories. But it also calls for more than a casual discarding of all those categories and a ready acceptance of every plausible idea and concept now on offer.

The "paradigm" that emerged in the late 1940s was the result of serious thought and sustained debate by men whose recent exposure to war discouraged superficiality and illusion. The result served America's interests well. So far there has not been a comparable response to the challenge of defining the character of the new era into which we are moving. Perhaps a generation addicted to the "sound-bite," the eight-hundred-word Op-Ed piece, and opinion polls will find such a response beyond it. One must hope not, for without a model that bears a reasonably close resemblance to emerging realities, the chances of formulating sound policies will be slim. □

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IN MEMORIAM

Remembering Joe Alsop

Friend of Presidents, punctilious (most of the time) reader of documents and collector of facts, coiner of hilarious, elliptical mots—*Joe Alsop will not soon be forgotten*

EDWIN M. YODER JR.

MORE THAN any other journalist I ever knew, Joe Alsop, who died on August 28, deserved a Boswell. But there was none; the Boswellian version of Alsop will have to be a patchwork effort by his friends.

I counted myself one in the years of his retirement. The Warren Zimmermanns, old friends of mine, were close family relations of Joe's; and Joe was often to be found at their Sunday lunches in Great Falls, Virginia. It was there, not long after coming to Washington to edit the *Star*'s editorial page, that I met him one autumn afternoon in 1975. Teeny Zimmermann had seated me just across from the great man, who was attired in the trademark bow tie and elegant waistcoat, and was a bit florid with wine. It was quite a moment for a junior member of his trade, one who had read him with envy, awe, and occasional vexation since high school. He noted my new duties at the *Star*: "Dear boy," he said, "to succeed in Washington journalism, you must lay about you!"

Laying about him, in a no-prisoners-taken polemical style, was Joe's notion of the editorialist's (and columnist's) duty—and fun. That I already knew well. I silently wondered whether he recalled that this was not our first exchange. In one of the dozens of columns about Vietnam that had fascinated and infuriated me (the war had ceased to make sense to me as early as February 1966), Joe argued that the campus uproars of the early 1970s exactly paralleled the famous "Oxford Oath" of the 1930s—he meant the resolution by a majority of the Oxford Union in 1933 that "this House refuses in any circumstances to fight for king and country." That event, Joe wrote, had gone far to persuade Hitler that the English were decadent and wouldn't fight.

All this might have been relegated to the file marked "columnist's bluster," but for one typical Alsopian touch. Joe was always a great one for documentation—his column long bore the standing head, Matter of Fact, and he liked to refer to himself, even at his most opinionated, as "this reporter." Now he claimed that what he wrote of Hitler was true, "as the archives show."

I am sure that word "archives" was included to get the goat of armchair amateur historians like me, and it succeeded. I wrote to Joe and asked: What archives, precisely? In reply he used an elaborately courteous but Olympian tone. He really couldn't be bothered, he said, "delving in the archives" to satisfy every reader's idle curiosity. But, he insisted, it was self-evidently true that Hitler had taken a fateful cue from the Oxford Oath. Hugh Trevor-Roper had told him so, as had Lord Lloyd. I couldn't resist a rejoinder. It was he, I noted, who had raised the subject of "archives," and one assumed that responsible journalism required that one knew which "archives" one was talking about. There were more exchanges, more appeals to distinguished historians, and finally it petered out, leaving me much entertained.

I mention it now, though I never had the nerve to do so to him, because Joe was indeed interested in "archives." I gather that it became a sort of joke in Washington how often Joe mentioned "captured documents" (from the Vietcong). But as Peter Braestrup notes in his book *The Big Story*, Joe was in fact an assiduous reader of documents no other journalist had the patience for; and he sometimes struck gold there. Joe was, for instance, among the very few in or out of government who forecast the Tet offensive weeks before it happened.

Yet in 14 years of friendship I never heard him discuss Vietnam, although one summer evening in his back garden in Georgetown that traumatic subject nearly surfaced. We were talking about Dean Acheson; I said that I, too, had been a great Acheson admirer, at a distance, but that on one occasion Acheson had disappointed me. "When was that?" Joe asked.

"When he was being interviewed on public television by

Mr. Yoder, who was editorial-page editor of the Washington Star *in the late Seventies, is now a syndicated columnist with the Washington Post Writers' Group.*

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several college students who didn't know enough to challenge him and maintained that there was no difference between Vietnam and Korea."

"There was none, absolutely none!" Joe roared.

"Joe," I said, "let me cite five or six salient differences, then you can shoot them down. Begin with the United Nations . . ." That was as far as I got.

"I never discuss Vietnam," he said, and the conversation came abruptly to an end. Maybe it was just as well, for there were certain views on the war he regarded as treasonable and mine might have been among them.

Joe Alsop had experienced so much of the American history of half a century and more that it was a temptation to treat him, in person, as a sort of archive. As a Supreme Court buff, I had long admired his absorbing book (in collaboration with Turner Catledge) about the FDR Court-packing fight of 1937, *The 168 Days*. Joe had written it at white heat, first as a series of articles for the *Saturday Evening Post*. Like much of Joe's more considered work it was a monument to shoe-leather journalism. He told me that he had interviewed nearly everyone vitally involved in the fight almost every day while it lasted. He had accumulated a bundle of notes "this big"—he stretched his hands at least a foot apart. I nearly leapt from my chair, for I knew that Bill Leuchtenburg was writing a big new study of the episode and would love to see those notes. Where were they? "I burned them all, dear boy," Joe said with unmistakable delight. There was something in him, notwithstanding his love of documentation, that took a naughty pleasure in cheating a historian of first-hand information.

All who knew Joe knew that John F. Kennedy had been a special presence in his life. Prominently displayed on his living-room wall was a scrap of paper, passed on to Joe by Jacqueline Kennedy after the assassination. "Joe Alsop—Berlin," it said, along with other notations in Kennedy's hand. When I saw it for the first time I immediately recalled the chilling column Joe had written soon after the Vienna summit of 1961. Joe had described with stark first-hand authority Kennedy's lonely and fatalistic musings about having one's finger on the nuclear button. It was in Joe's best doomsday style, and no doubt it had been intended for Khrushchev's eyes. Joe liked to tell of the famous inaugural evening when the Kennedys stopped by his house, and there were two especially vivid memories. One was that all he—one of Washington's celebrated gourmets and hosts—had at hand was a terrapin for terrapin soup. The other was of a beautiful woman who stood weeping at the banister of Joe's staircase as the Kennedys exited, thinking that her relationship with the new President was finished forever. Joe's feelings about Kennedy were deep. "I loved him," Joe once told me, simply.

In memory now it is all a jumble of details—the awful, gooey scrambled eggs that Eleanor Roosevelt herself fixed in an old family chafing dish for drop-in guests at the White House on Sunday evenings; the terse explanation for his and his brother Stewart's important protest against the persecution of Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer ("I was goddamned angry"); his memories of Henry A. Wallace, the "mystical goose," and of desperate people crawling like ants over mountains of garbage in New York City in the 1930s; the often hilarious, and often outrageous, Alsopian *mots*. "Women bring moths," he announced to some startled friends of mine one evening, explaining why one could never find an item in a house superintended by women. One night we were laughing about the odd ways of speech of an earlier day, and Joe fixed with hilarity on the standard inquiry about the antecedents of a married woman: "Who *was* she?" Joe relished the words, and let them rumble deep in his throat and chest in that familiar blend of gargle and roar that heralded a burst of laughter. "Arrr . . . Who . . . arrr . . . *was* she?"

The rich blend of memory and passion made moments with Joe memorable. At the National Portrait Gallery one evening, Joe was to deliver a lecture marking the FDR centennial. Many of Joe's friends were arrayed in front-row seats; we caught our breath as he struggled with his manuscript, his huge oval reading glasses, and the lingering effects of the dinner wines. Indeed, it seemed that this talk was never going to take wing, especially when he came, early, to the famous cable that FDR had sent Winston Churchill in the darkest hours of the Battle of Britain. FDR had quoted the Longfellow lines, *Sail on, O ship of state / Sail on, O Union, strong and great. . . .* As he spoke, the memory of that moment overwhelmed Joe with emotion and he began to weep unabashedly. Out came the familiar polka-dotted Alsopian handkerchief, of seeming table-cloth size. This, too, was vintage Alsop. For behind the facade of pomp, bluster, and epithet was a generous, kindly, vulnerable, deeply feeling, almost sentimental heart.

WE SENSED IT again at his funeral service at St. John's Church, Lafayette Square, in the surprising final hymn he had chosen for us to sing, "God Be with You Till We Meet Again," with its refrain: *Till we meet, till we meet, / Till we meet at Jesus' feet. / Till we meet, till we meet, / God be with you till we meet again.*

Meeting Joe Alsop, of all people, at Jesus' feet, and presumably in a posture of humility, seemed a new and incongruous thought; but as the Prayer Book says, in God all things are possible. Those who had never glimpsed the vulnerable Joe Alsop, longing for the faith he had known in boyhood, might have been a bit surprised by the penitential, almost evangelical tone of the service. Indeed, "God be with you till we meet again" has disappeared, as of 1982, from the Hymnal of the Protestant Episcopal Church—revised, as it were, from history. Even in the absence of a Boswell, however, I think that fate will not befall Joe Alsop. It would be like forgetting Mount Everest or the Grand Canyon or some other great marvel of the earth. Like them, Joe, I think, will last. □

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THE OPEN QUESTION

The Right Rights

HARRY V. JAFFA

NATIONAL REVIEW's editorial writer ("Or Cut Bait," Aug. 4) makes the assertion "that Israel continues to occupy, as it has for 22 years, territory [viz, Judea, Samaria, and Gaza] to which it has no claim or title." The same writer goes on to speak of "Israeli settlers on the West Bank" as "people who have no right to be where they are." Had the writer said that the claims or rights in question were disputed, or disputable, he would have been on tenable ground. He speaks, however, with a confidence that is exceeded only by his ignorance.

In considering what constitutes a claim or title to dominion or sovereign rights, surely conquest in a just war must rank very high. Most such claims and titles rest *only* on conquest. The independence of the United States was a result of the successful war effort headed by George Washington, the justice of which was proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence, a document that has never found much favor among the editors of NATIONAL REVIEW. The sovereignty of the United States over the 11 states that once made up the Confederacy rests upon conquest by the Union armies. The justice of that conquest—according to the Commander-in-Chief of those armies—was to be found in the proposition that all men are created equal, not the most highly admired of justifications among conservatives. The entire Southwest was wrested from Mexico by force of arms. The victories over Mexico were justified by what was called Manifest Destiny. This, one might say, is the American or non-Biblical version of the claim of divine donation by the Orthodox parties in Israel today.

Although Israel's rights from conquest in the Six-Day War rate at least as high on the moral scale as any other such rights recorded in history, that is not the sole or chief source of the claims to what is now called the West Bank and Gaza. These claims originated in the Balfour Declaration, and in the right to a Homeland for the Jews proclaimed therein. The Balfour Declaration was one of a series of promises that the British government made to both Arabs and Jews during World War I, to gain their support in the struggle against the Ottoman Empire, which was ranged on the side of the Central Powers—Germany and Austria.

During the war, there were at least three Jewish battalions, numbering over five thousand men, who fought in Allenby's army. Their contribution to victory was at least as great as that of Lawrence's legendary irregulars. But it was Chaim Weizmann's discovery in 1916 of a method of synthesizing acetone that saved the entire Allied cause from defeat, at a moment when its supplies of cordite (the only high explosive then known) were nearly exhausted. Weizmann—later the first president of Israel—was head of the World Zionist Agency.

One should note that during the First World War, Jews and Arabs, as comrades in arms against the Ottoman Empire, enjoyed a cordial relationship. No one then saw any contradiction in the fact that both T. E. Lawrence and Winston Churchill were Christian Zionists, supporting with equal fervor the claims of Jews and Arabs to sovereign states upon soil conquered from the Ottoman Turks. The Weizmann–Feisal accord of 1919 testifies to the Arab acceptance of the Jews as partners in the new Middle East. Very shortly, more than 98 per cent of the conquered land went to the creation of the Arab states of Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Lebanon, and Transjordan. The remaining 2 per cent (or less) was set aside for the homeland for the Jews promised in the Balfour Declaration.

Originally, Transjordan was part of the British Mandate for Palestine. The British carved it out to make way for another Hashemite kingdom, and in effect to provide them with another Arab client state. In doing so, they reduced by nearly four-fifths the area of the Homeland. At the same time they excluded Jews (and Jewish immigration) from Transjordan, thus making it what the Jews have ever since maintained it to be: *the* Arab Palestinian state. More important (for present purposes), by excluding from the Jewish Homeland all territory *east* of the Jordan River, they included in that same Homeland all territory *west* of the Jordan River. This embraced the territories now in dispute. The Homeland thus constituted was recognized in international law not only by the League of Nations Mandate, but by a Joint Resolution of the Congress of the United States, on September 21, 1922.

ARAB PALESTINIAN nationalism arose after the Balfour Declaration was implemented. Its leader—the predecessor of Yasir Arafat—was Haj Amin al-Husseini, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem. He, like the charter of the PLO today, called for the destruction of the Jews in Palestine. He spent the years of World War II in Berlin, expecting to become the *Gauleiter* of the Middle East after Hitler's victory, when he would contribute his share to the "final solution." During the war, he discovered a camp of several hundred Jewish orphans not far from Berlin. As a result of his efforts, they were packed off to extermination in either Buchenwald or Auschwitz.

The Peel Commission in 1937, and the United Nations in 1947, proposed to resolve the conflict within the boundaries of the Jewish Homeland, by partitioning it into Arab and Jewish sovereignties. In both cases, the Jews accepted and the Arabs rejected partition. Absent the acceptance of the Arabs, however, the Jews of Israel surrendered none of their rights stemming from the Balfour Declaration and the League of Nations Mandate. Their victory in the Six-Day War only placed them in possession of what had always been rightfully theirs under the best international law—short of conquest—that there is. □

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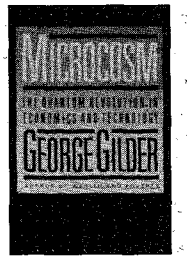

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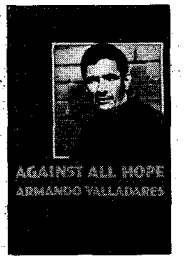

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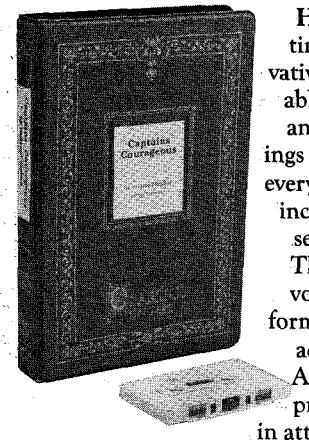

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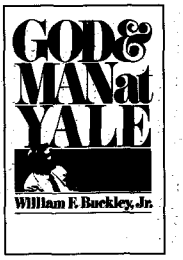

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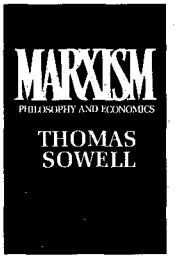

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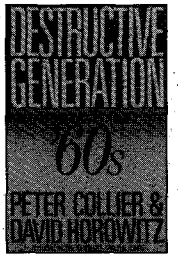

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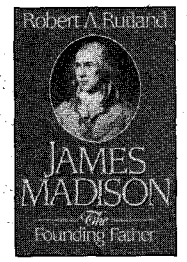

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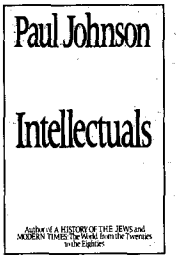

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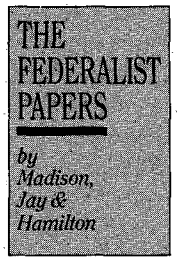

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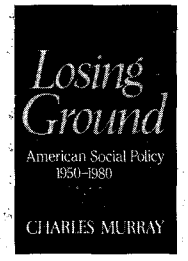

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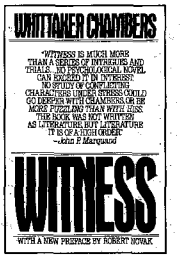

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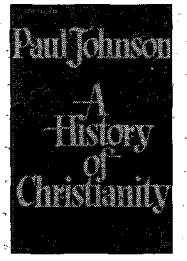

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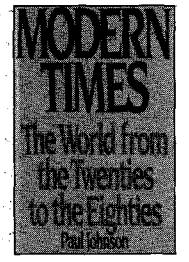

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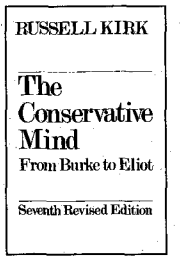

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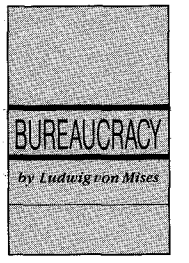

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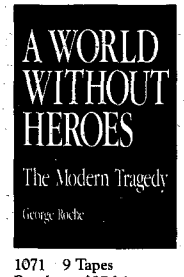

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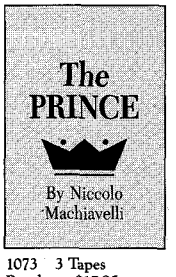

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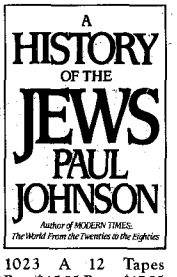

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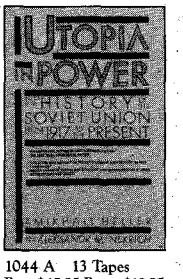

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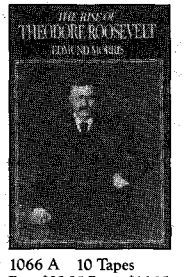

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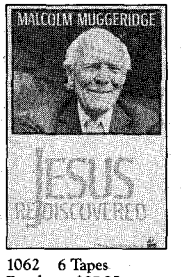

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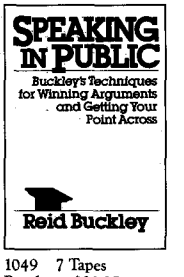

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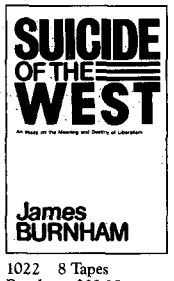

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When Bad Things Happen to Good Religion

RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS

REFERRING to Saint Paul and Norman Vincent Peale, Adlai Stevenson famously remarked, "I find Paul appealing but Peale appalling." In truth, there is not much evidence that Stevenson was very familiar with either. But it has long been good form to declare oneself appalled by the popular exponents of what historian Sydney Ahlstrom called "harmonial religion." In this half-

Who Needs God, by Harold Kushner (Summit, 208 pp., $18.95)

century, Peale, who is still alive and writing, is the chief exponent of this very American form of spirituality. *Guide to Confident Living* in 1948 prepared the way for *The Power of Positive Thinking* in 1952, which is still selling briskly. The proposal that, as with Coca-Cola, things go better with religion has been variously packaged. There was Rabbi Joshua Loth Liebman's *Peace of Mind* in 1946, Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen's *Peace of Soul* in 1949, and Dr. Billy Graham's *Peace with God* in 1953. Clearly, harmonial religion is an ecumenical enterprise.

There is some dispute about whether he actually said it, but Dwight Eisenhower is much quoted as having said in 1954, "Our government makes no sense unless it is founded on a deeply felt religious faith—and I don't care what it is." The books by Sheen and Graham, reflecting normative Christian traditions about which the authors are determinedly orthodox, clearly did care what "it" is. Similarly, Liebman was seriously interested in depth psychology and did not think that just any religion would do. To be fair, Norman Vincent Peale and his successors also care. The religion they recommend must "work" for you. What that means was indicated by Peale in an earlier (1938) title, *You Can Win*: "Life has a key, and to find that key is to be assured of success in the business of living . . . To win over the world a man must get hold of some power in his inward or spiritual life which will never let him down."

In the gospel according to Peale, that key is "positive thinking." As beamed by Robert Schuller from the Crystal Cathedral in California, it is "possibility thinking." In the work of Harold Kushner—like Liebman, a Reform rabbi from Boston—the key is found not in a zippy slogan but in a winsomely presented argument: "The purpose of religion is not to explain God or to please God, but to help us meet some of our most basic human needs." Summit Books, the publisher of Kushner's new book, *Who Needs God*, is betting on his becoming the unquestioned superstar of harmonial religion. The book already has been adopted by the Book-of-the-Month Club, and it will be building on the phenomenal success of his earlier *When All You've Ever Wanted Isn't Enough* and (an even bigger hit), *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*. Interestingly, Kushner sells very well also in Christian bookstores, which are typically run and patronized by folk who consider themselves theologically conservative. To understand Kushner is to understand important things about America.

Kushner, like Peale and Schuller, presents himself and his message as archetypically American. These writers propose nothing exotic or alien or, for that matter, even very new. Kushner and company are clearly distinct from that other perennially popular religion that is currently marketed under the New Age label (two decades ago it was the Age of Aquarius) and includes everything from reincarnation to arithomancy, channeling, crystal energizing, astrology, sacred sadism, and witchcraft. The effluvium of kinkiness, including an overdose of new–old "spiritualities," from the West Coast has in the view of many made California the nation's DEWS—Decadence Early Warning System. The rabbi from Boston is having none of that. He is a solid, although never stolid, proponent of bourgeois morality. He believes in an honest day's work, thinks the poor should not steal from the rich, puts in a strong word for premarital chastity, and even suggests that we should again call extramarital sex by its proper name, adultery.

Above all, Kushner believes in religion and urges people to "make room for their religious tradition in their lives." They should do so "not to make God happy but to make themselves happy." If one happens to be Jewish and wants to reach the millions who identify themselves as Christian, it makes sense not to be too specific about the kind of religion one is recommending. That is one part of it, but that does not explain why Christian preachers of harmonial religion also prescribe "religion in general." The deeper reason probably has to do with what John Murray Cuddihy described in his brilliant work *No Offense* as "civil religion and Protestant etiquette." The triumph of establishment Protestantism, also over certain varieties of Judaism, is evident in the acceptance of the belief that civil peace and, not so incidentally, market viability are secured by avoiding rival truth claims. Thus Kushner: "If believing in the Resurrection makes my Christian neighbor a better person, more loving and generous, better able to cope with misfortune and

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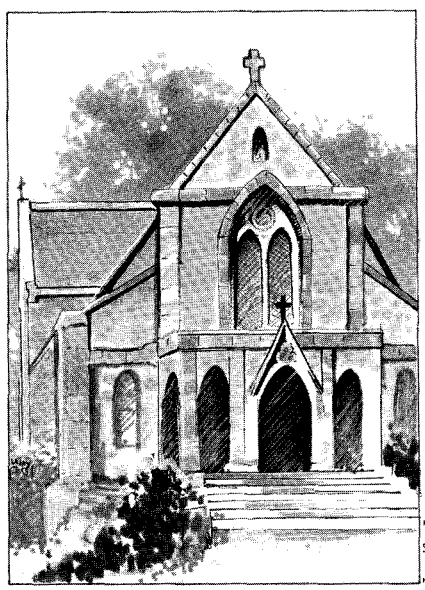
disappointment, then that is true belief, whether historically true or not."

If it works for you, it is true for you, and if it is true for you, then it is true in the only way that really matters, namely, it is useful. This is the famous American pragmatism that fancies itself to be a philosophy. Of course the idea of religion as a useful lie has a long pedigree. One recalls Gibbon's acid description of the religions of the Roman Empire: they were thought equally true by the populace, equally false by the philosophers, and equally useful by the rulers. In America the utility of religion, like almost everything else, has been thoroughly entrenched in public piety. A 1947 editorial in *Life*, for instance, had this to say about Methodism: "In many ways it is our most characteristic church. It is short on theology, long on good works, brilliantly organized, primarily middle class, frequently bigoted, incurably optimistic, zealously missionary, and touchingly confident of the essential goodness of the man next door."


Jennifer Lawson

Four decades later a declining Methodism is no longer zealously missionary except in trying, unsuccessfully, to recruit its middle-class members for the liberation struggles of the world's oppressed. But the other characteristics of the popular piety once promulgated by the mainline/oldline churches are, although now even shorter on theology, still flourishing in the church of harmonial religion. The chief characteristic, as perfectly exemplified by Harold Kushner, is to reduce all of religion to ethics, and then to reduce all of ethics to what makes us feel good about ourselves and other people. Kushner knows that it would be easy to dismiss his gospel as mere feel-goodism and therefore, like Peale, Schuller, and others, wants to make the argument that feeling good comes from being good and being good from doing good. Things go better with religion, then, because religious traditions bear the communal experience of what makes us do, be, and feel good.

Kushner proposes a conservative morality based on quintessentially liberal assumptions. He takes the expected fashionable swipes at fundamentalists and others who give offense by assuming that the law of noncontradiction applies to religious truth claims. The awful fundamentalists are inclined to think that two conflicting truths are not both true simply because one finds them "helpful." Kushner takes a different view: "Religions can disagree and still each be true because people's spiritual needs come in different forms." He says he cherishes the words of William Sloane Coffin, formerly of Riverside Church in New York, who said, "We can build a community out of seekers of truth, but not out of possessors of truth." (As Jesus did *not* say, "Seek in the hope that ye shall not find.") At the same time, Kushner says he admires and applauds much in the current turn toward conservatism, also in religion, but he clearly wants to keep his distance from it: "I cherish my liberal religious values and await the day when they will be fashionable once again," he writes.

Yet Kushner does appear to be a moral conservative. Morality, he urges, is not something that we make up as we go along but is somehow God-given. From where do we get our moral sense? "I would maintain that it comes from God, by which I mean that it is not man-made, not a matter of human consensus, but is built into the world we live in, as part of what makes it a world capable of morality." That sounds orthodox enough. Indeed it sounds very much like what some theologians call "natural law" or "common grace." The quintessential liberalism of Harold Kushner is not in the morality he espouses but, quite precisely, in his *theology*, his understanding of this "God" from whom morality comes.

Nobody should accuse Kushner of being a systematic thinker, and his books are, after all, written for the millions who have not been immersed in the nicer points of theology or philosophy. Even the untutored reader, however, might awake from the pleasures of feeling good about feeling good to wonder whether this God Who feels so good about us is not Someone or Something quite different from the God of traditional Judaism and Christianity. The God of *Who Needs God*, Kushner insists, is not a God Who "knows what is good for us better than we ourselves do." While he speaks of God acting in forgiving sin, securing justice, and so forth, he wants it understood that these acts "are not things that God does; they are things that *we* do." Similarly, he does not wish to deny the possibility of miracles, but "God works miracles today by enabling ordinary people to do extraordinary things." He leaves no doubt that the expression "God works" means that we work together to enable ourselves to be our best. Even worship is not to please or serve God but to help ourselves. "When worship works, its effect is truly magical." Worship "works" when we transcend our individualism and become part of the communal religious experience that we call "the presence of God."

In short, the true is the useful, and "God" is the sum of the human community's useful truths. Kushner's theology, so to speak, is radically anthropocentric. He cites Emile Durkheim's conclusion "that the primary purpose of religion in early societies was not to put individual people in touch with God, but to put them in touch with each other." And so today, God is created in our communal image. Kushner invokes an oft-quoted illustration from sociologist Peter Berger in which Berger tells of a child terrified by the dark who is told by his mother, "Don't be afraid—everything is in order, everything is all right." Berger then asks, in italics, "*Is the mother lying to her child?*" For Berger, that is an urgent question of truth or falsehood regarding the nature of reality. For Kushner, as he repeatedly asserts, religion is not about truth as "fact" but truth as what makes us feel and be better. Terrified by the night, we human beings gather to reassure ourselves that "everything is in order, everything is all right," and, if it works, if we are reassured, then everything *is* all right. Thus do we "achieve a true relationship with God."

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Doing a turn on Pogo, the conclusion to be drawn is that we have met God and he is us. Interestingly, Kushner dwells at some length on Martin Buber, the Jewish theologian who in this century accented the radical difference between the I–it and I–Thou relationships. Put too briefly, the I–it relationship is instrumental, when we view other people as *objects* in terms of their utility. I–Thou, on the other hand, is established when others become *subjects* to us, persons addressing us as we address them. The ultimate I–Thou relationship is determined in our being addressed by God. In Kushner, however, and in harmonial religion generally, it seems very doubtful that there is any Thou there. The ultimate I–Thou relationship is, in fact, I–we. This is no doubt an exceedingly salable proposition. Many people much prefer a God that is our idealized collective self over a God who gets Himself killed on a cross or commands His elect people never to eat pork.

Those with little interest in theology, however, might protest that all this is beside the point. The point, they say, is that Peale, Schuller, Kushner, and their imitators in fact help people to cope, to experience "success in the business of living." There is undeniable truth in that. Kushner, more than Peale or Schuller, is particularly attractive in his sensitivity to life's losers and those who are trying to come to terms with tragedy in their lives. If these people who are in real pain are in fact helped to get their lives together, it seems almost churlish to quibble over the means employed. Beyond the personal dimension, there is no doubt that ours would be a kinder, gentler, more generous, more peaceful, and altogether better-ordered America if everybody lived the way the harmonial preachers urge us to live. It is a powerfully pleasing prospect. Were it not for the question of truth.

Harmonial religion is the popular reinforcement of what Alasdair MacIntyre in *After Virtue* describes as the divorce between "fact" and "value" that makes public moral discourse almost impossible in our culture. In harmonial religion the call for a return to "objective" values has a conservative ring, but it is supported by an argument that is relativistic to the core. Teaching a class of teenagers, Kushner asks them why Hitler was wrong to kill Jews. Is it merely our opinion that he was wrong, and might others have other opinions about it that are just as valid? He urgently wants to answer in the negative, to say that the condemnation of Hitler is required by moral truth that is somehow "God-given." But upon closer examination, the rabbi is forced to admit, indeed he seems eager to explain, that the God-given is only what we have agreed upon among ourselves. We *have* to agree that our judgment is "true," because the alternative is too awful to contemplate. In this context, "objective" signifies nothing more than the urgency of our need to believe.

As has been said of psychoanalysis, harmonial religion is the disease of which it claims to be the cure. Of this religion it may accurately be said that it is the opiate of the masses, providing a welcome escape from the need to engage questions of moral truth, both personal and public. Harold Kushner cares deeply about those who are terrified by the dark. "Don't be afraid," he says in a thousand soothing ways. "Everything is in order, everything is all right." Because people desperately want to hear that, and maybe because they are not hearing it elsewhere, the books of harmonial religion will continue to sell in the millions. For many, perhaps for most, of these people the harmonial gospel really does contribute to "success in the business of living." But honest atheists and agnostics, as well as more orthodox Christians and Jews, will, for their own sake and for the sake of public moral discourse, stubbornly refuse to surrender truth to utility. With Peter Berger, they will persist in asking, "*Are the harmonial preachers lying?*" □

China Present, China Future

ROSS TERRILL

ABOUT MIDNIGHT last June 3, not far from Tiananmen Square, a sweating young man in a blue tank top was tugging at a flagstone on Beijing's principal boulevard. I watched him pry it loose and hurl it with a curse in the direction of an ambulance which had just arrived at the rear of an angry crowd. "It's not really an ambulance," a woman cried out to me. "In it are plainclothes soldiers trying to get beyond the crowd into Tiananmen."

Tiananmen Diary: Thirteen Days in June, by Harrison Salisbury (Little, Brown, 176 pp., $18.95)

I had come upon the last hours of an extraordinary cat-and-mouse game between the Chinese military and a citizenry whose anti-government emotions had been plucked to the surface by the student democracy movement of April and May. For many days, armies had been inching toward the city. As they advanced, they met a resistance—the tongues and arms of the people—that was an ironic commentary on their own name, People's Liberation Army. Now the soldiers were making ready to crush the resistance once and for all. I wondered if this could really be the China I had known for 25 years, where submission to authority, however misguided, is supposed to be the norm.

In Tiananmen itself, rival loudspeakers conveyed a mood that was becoming tense and jumpy. It was part of the camaraderie of those hours that people shared information with cheerfulness and good humor, and that the foreigner, who cannot always feel at ease in the Middle Kingdom, was welcomed with absolute openness. A crackdown was expected, and yet when it came a few hours later in the form of shooting at crowds, the spectacle seemed incredible even to the Chinese themselves.

At this time Harrison Salisbury, the veteran *New York Times* journalist, was in his room at the Beijing Hotel, overlooking the increasingly violent scene. In *Tiananmen Diary* (rushed into print by its publisher),

Mr. Terrill is the author of The Australians. *His most recent books on China are* The White-Boned Demon *and* Mao. *His next (from Simon & Schuster) will be a memoir–history of China over the past 25 years.*

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RANDOM NOTES

■ PATRIOTIC GORE: Jew-hating schlock-novel writer Gore Vidal laid down the law a few years ago: When it comes to issues of American foreign policy in the Middle East, there is reason to question the patriotism of any American Jew who disagrees with Gore Vidal. In a 1986 article in *The Nation*, Vidal argued that American Jews who support Israel constitute an "Israeli fifth column" and are basically traitors.

Now it turns out that there are issues on which deviations from Gorthodoxy can raise doubts about even a non-Jew's spiritual citizenship. In an essay to be collected next month in *Paths of Resistance: The Art and Craft of the Political Novel* (Houghton Mifflin), Vidal devotes four pages to refuting a negative review his book *Empire* received in 1987 from the *Washington Times*. In this latest entry in his long series of "historical novels," Vidal deployed a fictionalized Henry James as a sort of editorial spokesman for his own peculiar brand of left-wing neo-isolationism. The *Times* reviewer judged the book's portrayal of James "improbable." In *Paths of Resistance*, Vidal responds by vilifying the *Times*, which he tags a "South Korean newspaper," and referring to the reviewer as "the South Korean reviewer" and "my South Korean critic."

Of course, the *Times* is owned by the Reverend Sun Myung Moon. The paper's masthead, though, bears not a single Asian name, Korean or otherwise, and it's pretty well established by now that editorial decisions are made independently of Moon's Unification Church. As for the reviewer himself, Vidal never mentions his name, but a little digging reveals him to have been the distinguished Hemingway biographer Kenneth S. Lynn. Asked to comment, Lynn promised that, "despite my ancient Oriental name," he hasn't a drop of Korean blood in him. All of which raises an alarming question. Vidal's principal publisher, Random House, is owned by S. I. Newhouse, a Jew. If writing an occasional book review for the *Washington Times* makes Kenneth Lynn a South Korean critic, does writing novels for Random House make Gore Vidal a Jewish novelist?

■ END OF HISTORY: The National Endowment for the Humanities reports that a quarter of American college students don't know when Christopher Columbus sailed the ocean blue, and nearly half don't know when the Civil War was fought. Now it looks as if much of the blame may lie with the people who write and publish the textbooks used in American high schools. According to a study released this month by the American Federation of Teachers, wherever possible these books substitute space-filling fluff—pictures, charts, graphs, boxed features—for anything resembling serious history. Used in the study were five of the most popular 11th-grade history books: *Triumph of the American People* (Harcourt, Brace), *People and Our Country* (Holt, Rinehart), *The United States: A History of the Republic* (Prentice-Hall), *History of a Free People* (Macmillan), and *A History of the United States* (Ginn & Co.). Written by Paul Gagnon, a history professor at the University of Massachusetts at Boston, the study concludes that the subjects slighted most often in these books include military strategy and practice, religion, and foreign relations. Biographies of political leaders are frequently edited to the bone to make room for embellished accounts of the deeds of women, minorities, and working people.

A forthcoming book edited by Gagnon, *Historical Literacy: The Case for History in American Education* (due out in November from Macmillan), will expand on the AFT report and, hopefully, attract greater attention to the issue.

—DAVID KLINGHOFFER

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we have his observations from June 1 through June 13; in Beijing until June 5, and then in points south, where he repaired to work on a Japanese TV documentary. The diary becomes thin after he leaves Beijing. He has spiced it—sometimes confusingly in the matter of tense—with flashbacks from his previous experiences in China and in Russia. At the end he offers an impassioned post-mortem of the crisis written on his return to Connecticut.

The crisis had a three-fold political setting. Old Deng Xiaoping had turned into a Mao, reliving past battles, distrusting any Number Two man whose fingers itched for the crown. Second, the army had changed; its status was lower, it was not doing well out of Deng's modernization policies, and the enemy it was supposed to combat was no longer clear-cut. And finally, from the summer of 1988 on, there was a dispute on reform policy. Zhao Ziyang, the Party chief, wished to solve problems like inflation by going ahead with further reforms. Li Peng, the premier, favored pausing for a while. In all these respects Tiananmen was, among other things, a familiar Communist dog-eat-dog power struggle.

Salisbury felt a sense of unreality about the military operation, and he suspected that the government was practicing entrapment to bring on a showdown. On both points I felt the same. The army did not move like troops intent on reoccupying Tiananmen and merely securing order. It was hard to understand at times, as Salisbury says, at whom the military was firing and why. Salisbury was amazed how unafraid people seemed to be. "Almost as if they couldn't conceive that the army has chosen them as its target."

Looking back, we can see that two things ended the eerie days of apparent paralysis in late May: Zhao lost out in the Politburo struggles; then—only then—Deng moved to arrange the shooting. Salisbury was glad to get out of Beijing before the reign of Orwellian rule-by-lies began. On the way south to Wuhan, he found himself at Beijing airport "responding to the sounds of the airport as though I am still in the heart of the battle." A week or so later he left China (calling off the Japanese documentary for the time being), afraid that he might be seized as a hostage.

The publisher, making exalted claims for the book, says the author has "traveled extensively throughout the country for thirty years." Yet from Salisbury's lively, eloquent 1973 book, *To Peking and Beyond*, one has the distinct impression that a 1972 visit to China was his first. And Salisbury himself makes some surprising claims. "I think I know China as well as, if not better than, any member of the Standing Committee of the Politburo," he writes in *Tiananmen Diary*, but, since he cannot speak with the Chinese people in their own tongue or read what they write, this is dubious. He insists on using Chinese words, but does not always get them right (*hu tong*, the word for lane, is repeatedly misspelled). In fact

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there are so many errors in well-known Chinese proper names—Qinghua University, the new Party chief's name, Jiang Zemin—that the reader's confidence is shaken.

Still, *Tiananmen Diary* benefits from the familiar Salisbury exuberance, industry, and curiosity. Ultimately it holds one's interest because of its subject, closely observed by a seasoned professional. I also found the book moving in its reflection of a lost faith. Salisbury aptly noted in the confusion of the morning of June 4: "I keep getting stopped by people in the hotel who ask me what I think. I don't know what to think except that Deng has blown it, really blown it—himself, his great reputation, China present, China future."

Salisbury is very much an American liberal (and a bit of a Confucian) in the hope he attaches to good men with good intentions. To me, he overstates the departures Deng made from the Mao era. Leninism, even after Marxist faith has faded, is still Communism; and Communists, when up against it, have a strong tendency to behave like Communists. Salisbury says old age and paranoia overtook Deng, and he tries to pinpoint the timing of Deng's personal decline. I'm not sure this is the point.

Salisbury is left with the bleak conclusion that "there can be no such thing as a peaceful transition from one kind of government to another," but what about Spain after Franco, Portugal after Salazar? What about the more or less peaceful transitions to democracy in South Korea and the Philippines? I would draw a distinction between the prospects of moving away from non-Communist authoritarianism, and from Communist authoritarianism. No Communist authoritarian political system has ever become a democracy (let us wait and see whether Poland becomes the first). Spending the month of June 1989 in China reaffirmed my view of many years that Leninist political systems are intractable.

Salisbury calls the Chinese leaders "reactionaries," but they are leftist authoritarians. To talk of "liberals" and "conservatives" (or reactionaries) in China is to engage in superficial political relativism, as if the Chinese system is really just like ours. It is to ignore the unyielding and monolithic character of Leninist one-party rule. Additionally, the impulse of the individual to take his life into his own hands—the real trigger of the democracy movement—encounters resistance in strong strains of Chinese collectivism and fatalism. The new cosmopolitanism of China's leading cities is reined in by a Chinese heartland maddeningly unable to join the modern world.

In 1949 Mao said China had "stood up," but, held down for forty years by

Jennifer Lawson

dictatorship, economic backwardness, and aspects of traditional Chinese culture, the Chinese individual is, in fact, still waiting to stand up. Communism, as an ideal, may have died as the people stared in horror at their army on the night of June 3, 1989, but democracy did not take its place.

About 3 A.M. on June 4 my pedicab driver said to me: "You know, I carried the students for free. Didn't charge them a penny."

"Why did you carry them for free?" something made me ask.

"Because they're *doing something*," this small businessman replied. In a society where staying in line is indeed the norm, the student initiative had been like a streak of lightning that illumines a vast stretch of terrain and brings a thunderstorm to a sleepy land. Something important happened last summer to our perceptions of the Chinese people. China was once a threat. Later China became exotic. Now the Chinese people's struggle for freedom has become a universal cause, understandable the world over.

There is no mistaking Salisbury's personal disillusion. He says just before quitting China: "I am beginning to understand the feeling of the generations of Americans who have come to China and given their hearts to the country and then been driven away by some cataclysm." Reaching Hong Kong, he writes: "It lies on my conscience. To think I know the men who did this!" He now finds China a "cruel country."

Of the future Salisbury writes truly: "There is no way Deng's condition will take a turn for the better. The trend is down and it will not change." Deng cannot retire. Like the emperors, he will rule until he dies. Until that moment, China will remain politically tight and uncreative—then all hell could break loose. □

Weird Science

ALEX LANE

JEREMY RIFKIN'S *Entropy: Into the Greenhouse World* (first published in 1980 but now reissued in an updated and expanded edition) dismisses humanity's progress over the past three centuries as illusion because it rests on a false world view based on Newtonian mechanics. Instead, Rifkin offers an alternative world view, based on a sometimes literal but often metaphorical interpretation of the Second Law of Thermodynamics, as embodied in the concept of entropy. Originally, "entropy" was a specific term used to describe the part of a closed system's thermal energy that is not available for conversion into mechanical work. In recent years, the word has been corrupted by popular use, and Rifkin seems intent on continuing the trend.

Entropy: Into the Greenhouse World, by Jeremy Rifkin (Bantam, 355 pp., $9.95)

Rifkin's argument reduces to a simple syllogism: Physical systems tend inevitably toward disorder because of entropy. The world is a physical system. Therefore, entropy

Mr. Lane is an engineer living in Jacksonville, Florida.

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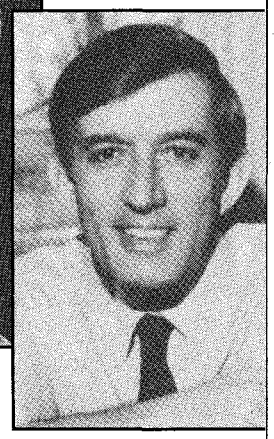
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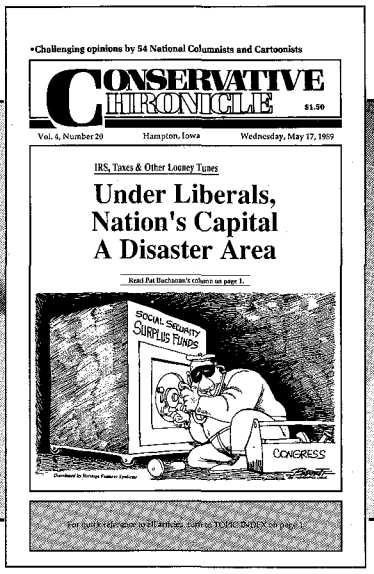
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causes the world to become increasingly disordered. Okay, you might think, time to roll over and die—but wait! Although entropy governs the "horizontal world of time and space," it nevertheless does not affect "the vertical world of spiritual transcendence." Not only is the spiritual plane not affected by entropy, it turns out that the Entropy Law is "governed by the primordial spiritual force that conceived it."

Rifkin entreats the reader to accept his paradigm and enter upon "a postmodern way of thinking about the world," one in which "economic production and social consumption would never be allowed to outpace the ecosystem's ability to recycle waste and renew the stock of available resources." We've heard this before. So what's postmodern about ecological socialism?

The infrastructure of our cities is disintegrating, says Rifkin, because of entropy. Education doesn't work because abstract thinking dissipates energy, and thus raises entropy. Medical progress is a fraud; X-rays do more harm than good, and antibiotics are a bad idea. Medical intervention did little to conquer smallpox, which went away by itself, as did typhoid and influenza. Entropy at work. Right.

Notably absent from this analysis is any discussion of the political decisions to pursue policies that result in what Rifkin sees as increased entropy. What of the shortsightedness of politicians who cut funding for road maintenance to expand social programs? What of educational theories that prize equality of outcome over quality? Are such decisions and policies irrelevant? Or are they (considering their consistently liberal nature) an embarrassment to explain?

The book is dutifully peppered with citations which bolster the text's appearance of thorough, "scientific" analysis, and which purport to show the extent and expertise of the author's supporting sources. These sources include such bulwarks of moderation and impartiality as the *Washington Post*, the *New York Times*, the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, *Mother Jones*, SANE, and Zero Population Growth.

It would be unfair to say that the book does not try to address serious subjects. It does. However, reading this book is not the way to learn about the problems confronting the world today, or about solving them. The science in the book is sloppy, and the arguments often specious. It is difficult to turn a page without encountering a fallacious argument.

At its root, this book attempts to establish a scientific basis for the anti-industrial, anti-nuclear, anti-capitalist, and anti-intellectual views of its author. It fails. For all of its scientific posturing, the book is an exercise in maudlin mysticism, a paean to a simpler life that never existed. □

A Master's Touch

ROY DOLINER

THAT THIS COLLECTION of stories is superb should be no surprise to anyone familiar with V. S. Pritchett's work. Think for a moment, though, about his achievement: at age ninety, Pritchett has been writing for nearly seventy years. A critical review at this point would seem impertinent; a celebration is more in order—with some words about how a master writes his stories.

A Careless Widow, by V. S. Pritchett (Random House, 160 pp., $16.95)

The short story is an elusive form. Too short, and it is a sketch; too long, and it becomes a novella. Cinderella is a short story, as are the myths of the ancients, the Biblical accounts of David and Goliath, Adam and Eve, and each of *The Canterbury Tales*.

Young writers often start out writing short stories, thinking they are easier than novels. They are not. Novels can be (and often are) long-winded, sprawling, and discursive. A novel can roll over its own mistakes. But in the short story, no such license is given. Properly, it is exact, with the tautness that comes when every word is *necessary*.

Dialogue, for instance, has to be right on the money; no time for chit-chat in a short story. The writer holds a ready finger above the record button and, if a character starts to prattle, cuts him off. Of course, all fiction is edited. It must be. Only life is a first draft; life with its tedium and imprecision. There is little tedium in a good short story, and no imprecision at all.

Here is a master at work:

> What had struck me particularly in the fleshy young man was his trousers: his jacket was open and the trousers were braced high over his wide waist, almost to his ribs. He had black hair with a curl over his forehead and a damp, glistening crimson face; his fists, his nose, his lips were heavy; his body looked too full of blood, like that of a boxer or a publican or one of the security guards at the bank. Rhoda said: "I want you to meet Sammy. He's my lover . . ."

That's from the title story of *A Careless Widow*, and it is a pleasure to read. It is clear and exact, and in only a few strokes "the fleshy young man" is brought to life. A single, perfect line of dialogue does it for Rhoda.

Pritchett was born the year after Ernest Hemingway, two years before John Steinbeck, and four years before Anton Chekhov died. He has published at least 11 collections of stories, six novels, and biographies of Balzac, Turgenev, and of the grand master himself, in *Chekhov: A Spirit Set Free*. There are two delightful memoirs, *A Cab at the Door* and *Midnight Oil*. He has also written literary criticism and travel books.

With all that, one is tempted to concentrate on the long life and overlook the new stories. That would be a mistake, for they are as wise and funny, as meticulously observed and lucid as ever.

Has anyone done an English seaside hotel as well as Pritchett?

> The guests in the hotel turned their backs to the windows and sat hiding themselves behind newspapers: the heartier ones went boisterously out to their cars. One or two little groups sat around talking about their relations in the towns they came from, in the tones of people sitting after a funeral. Every now and then a golfer would come back from

Mr. Doliner is the author of a dozen novels. His most recent was The Twelfth of April.

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— Elliott Abrams, former Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs

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— Joseph Sobran, Senior Editor National Review

Every month when I receive *MediaWatch*, I can just see and hear the leftwingers in the major media gnashing their teeth. Bravo to *MediaWatch* for exposing the hypocrisy in so much of what's going on among the 'news' business in our time."

— Senator Jesse Helms

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the main door dispirited. Lionel sat in the coffee room, which was usually empty in the morning. An expert in choosing chairs, he had marked down one on the first day. It was now unoccupied. He kept an eye on the puddles on the terrace and saw at last that the rain was stopping.

Lionel is a middle-aged Londoner enjoying a solitary holiday when a neighbor, Mrs. Morris (the "careless widow" herself), shows up unexpectedly. Mrs. Morris talks too much, and Lionel, though polite and reticent, is appalled to see her. There is more to this than meets the eye. In an effortless flashback, Pritchett describes an evening some time before. Lionel is cooking his dinner (in case we have any doubts at all about who he is, we learn he will dine alone on chicken breasts, which he prepares wearing a blue and white apron), when Mrs. Morris comes to the door seeking help with her husband, who has had a stroke. Together they grapple with the dying man and get him into bed. A bond is created between them, and Lionel, slow at this sort of thing, becomes physically aware of Mrs. Morris for the first time. She has sensed his interest and, when her husband dies, begins a widowly courtship. It is a chaste affair, wisely so, and sex drums slowly, at times inaudibly, although its beat is always there. Mrs. Morris tells Lionel the juicier bits of her life story. He mostly listens. He is a solitary man, but Mrs. Morris is lonely. The distinction is neatly made. Lionel has little need to tell his story, while the widow *must* tell hers. But he does tell her of a school chum killed in the War and of his mother. Lionel, a barber, remembers watching his mother do her hair.

The widow is determined to have a life, and if Lionel will not or cannot care for her, she will find a man who will and can. She meets an old friend, a widower, and pretties herself up for him. She gets her hair cut.

Lionel admires her. "Now you have a head," he says. "I am jealous." It is the jealousy of the professional, not the lover. Still, Mrs. Morris swallows her pride and gives Lionel a second chance. But he has seen the marrying in her eyes, and he wants none of it. He thinks of solitary walks on the cliffs above the sea.

There is nothing sentimental about the story, or about any of the others in the collection; Pritchett is far too hard-headed for that. The other stories in the collection may not be as well crafted as "A Careless Widow," but there are excellent bits in each of them. These are stories of the English people Pritchett has always written about, mostly good, nearly always comic. In part, Pritchett has seen it as his duty to *justify* these people. "For we all feel," he has written, "that for good or ill, we are exceptional and justified in being what we all are."

Over the long course of his life, Pritchett has done the writer's duty. He has listened and looked, stored it all up, had it come forth unbidden, and has modestly gone about the task of setting it all down.

A friend of mine sent his first novel to a favorite teacher, Sister Monica. She took her time with the book, but finally sent my friend a simple note. "You have great talent," she wrote. "God is good."

When I read Pritchett's stories and think of the writer's long life, Sister Monica comes to mind. I admit I've had my doubts, but you look at old Pritchett, ninety and still going strong, and you think perhaps it *is* true: God is good. □

FILM

Sex and Violence, Together Again

JOHN SIMON

IS THERE such a thing as a totally persuasive thriller? One that doesn't cheat by intentionally withholding information or deliberately misleading you or playing fast and loose with character? Perhaps there is, but all too often you end up with questions such as "How could he have known this?" and "Why would she have done that?" Still, most of us are ready to grab at any hook to suspend our disbelief from; even so, doubts creep in. They creep all over *Sea of Love*, but the film is fun to watch.

It seems that the connection among several New York City murders is that each victim was a man who advertised for female companionship in the personals of *New York Weekly*, and, what's more, advertised in verse. God knows there are few enough lonely hearts who espouse verse for their solicitations, and even fewer souls who care enough about poetry to shoot those who abuse it in the head at point-blank range. But it seems there is a young woman who—apparently out of some less justifiable motive than love of poetry—does dispatch lyrically lustful swains in that manner, and it is up to detectives

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Frank Keller from Manhattan and his new partner, Sherman Touhey from Queens (site of one of the murders), to track down a killer who must be quite a woman judging by the alacrity with which the victims admitted her to their apartments.

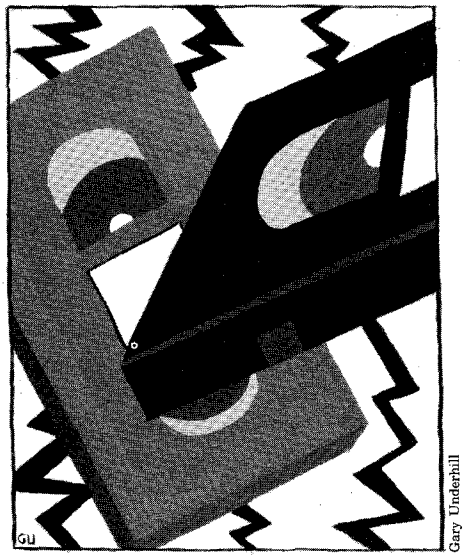
The method our sleuths hit upon is placing just such a poetical ad in said magazine and asking respondees to a tryst at a popular restaurant, where one of them pretends to be the love-starved fellow, the other a waiter. Frank and Sherman take turns in each role. Now, although service in most restaurants is shockingly amateurish, a detective-waiter might still arouse suspicion. But let it go, especially since the scenes of first meetings with women are among the movie's best. There is a problem in this kind of work for both detectives: for hollow-eyed Frank, a tense, overwrought twenty-year man whose wife has just left him for his former partner, and who needs a new woman almost badly enough to put a genuine ad into the personals, as well as for good-natured, roly-poly Sherman, a happily married man who can use a little relief from so much domestic bliss. Sherman, to be sure, connects with a harmless flake; but Frank may have hit on the perpetrator, or, in this film's parlance, the doer.

Or has he? Certainly, Helen is an alluring young woman in a broad-shouldered jacket crimson enough for an old-style executioner. Or is she that alluring? Ellen Barkin, a good actress who nevertheless has nothing like the looks of a femme fatale, a role in which she is repeatedly being cast, might still be tempting enough to a lonely versifier. Indeed, she is so sure of herself that, displeased, she can promptly walk out on Frank Keller. And given Al Pacino's appearance these days—midway between owlish and cadaverous—a woman might well think twice. But perhaps not if she is the kind that answers such ads, and with checkmating rather than mating on her mind.

In any case, we and Frank know that this fish should not get away; nevertheless she does, without so much as leaving a fingerprint on a glass for Sherman to match up with the killer's. But as luck or the screenwriter would have it, Frank and Helen meet again by chance and, this time, click. Before you know it, they hit the bedroom, but not yet the sack; this is one of those mature movies even heavier on foreplay than on copulation. After which the enamored Frank wipes off Helen's fingerprints before he could check them.

Sea of Love begins with the corralling of a number of minor criminals in an amusing but wildly unbelievable way. More credible is the edginess of a detective who has reached the point where he could retire at half pay, but would then have nothing to live for. Credible, too, are the crazy fights he picks with his partner who has taken over his ex-wife. But Keller's problems are almost too much for the film, too real for the titillating, contrived main plot.

Still, Richard Price, the novelist



Gary Underhill

and occasional screenwriter (*The Color of Money*), has come up with an attention-holding situation: a woman who may be a man-killer but who may also have fallen genuinely in love with this particular man, who, however, may want to arrest her for murder; and a man who may be grossly neglecting his police duty, not to mention imperiling his life, by falling for that woman. From their tangled motives and conflicting behavior, the film derives suspense in the teeth of improbability, and Harold Becker (who has made at least one memorable movie, *The Onion Fields*) has directed with appropriate splashiness. Barkin, Pacino, and John Goodman (Sherman) do well, although the first two are no slouches when given the chance to overact. *Sea of Love* even begins with a striking piece of dishonesty, but by the time we realize that, we have been swep far enough out to make swimmin back to shore impossible.

SEX, LIES, AND VIDEOTAPE may be th most overrated, and is surel the most irritating, movie i some time. Made by 26-year-old Ste ven Soderbergh in his home town o Baton Rouge, it won best-film honor at Cannes for its writer-director, and best-actor prize for James Spader, who plays Graham, a young man who returns to Baton Rouge after a nine-year absence. He comes both to see his old flame, Elizabeth, and not to see her, both with a wad of money and with no visible source for it, both to arouse the two women in the story and to declare himself impotent, both to seem a perfect scoundrel and to end up in what promises to be a good, fulfilling relationship with the wife of his ex-roommate and dear friend, John.

John (Peter Gallagher) is an up-and-coming lawyer who has just been made a junior partner at thirty, but who is cheating on his pretty though troubled wife, Ann (Andie MacDowell), with her sexy and sexually voracious sister, Cynthia (Laura San Giacomo). Cynthia works as a bartender at a strange establishment that has a bar roughly a mile long but only a single, permanent customer, evidently sealed onto his stool, and played with notable lack of virility by Steven Brill. This barfly makes indiscriminate advances to Cynthia and, whenever she drops in, her sister. Ann, however, will no longer be touched, at least not by her husband, who, however, is more than satisfied by Cynthia, with whom he has a nice arrangement: whenever one of them feels horny, a phone call brings the other one running. This seems to be no problem at the mile-long bar, but it does create difficulties for John. First, Ann is so furious at discovering one of Cynthia's earrings near the conjugal bed that she rushes off to be videotaped by Graham in one of those sex interviews he conducts with countless young women. Next, John loses some important clients as a result of his absenteeism and may forfeit his job.

Graham questions women on videotape about their sex lives and fantasies, then uses his collection of tapes to masturbate by, the only form of sex

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he can still muster. Cynthia promptly ferrets out Graham and not only talks but also masturbates for his camera. This doubly distresses her sister when Cynthia tells her about it because Ann, who has fallen for Graham, was shocked to learn about those tapes; now she is also jealous of Cynthia. Finding that earring is the last straw; Ann actually seduces Graham during her videotaped interview, then initiates divorce proceedings. Earlier, John had raced over to Graham's, punched out his ex-roommate, watched the tape of his wife, then bragged about his affair with Graham's chastely beloved Elizabeth. Whereupon Graham destroys his tapes and embarks on what augurs to be perfect bliss with Ann. Do you buy any of this?

It is the sort of plot worked out easily enough with a slide rule and a prurient, second-rate mind. The film sheds no genuine light, only a lot of spurious heat. The nearest it gets to enlightening us is during Ann's sessions with her therapist (played by Ron Vawter as someone who might have far greater need of psychiatry himself), and it isn't much: Ann assumes funny poses on the confessional couch and rattles on about her worries concerning what happens to all that garbage out there. (Quite a bit of it finds shelter in this film.) For the rest, we get Graham's soulful maunderings and sex scenes between Cynthia and John that look more like parodies. We are to recognize Cynthia's nymphomania by her always running around barefoot, wearing an ankle bracelet, and taking some of her clothes off even when merely visiting her sister.

Yet it is the men in the film who are photographed nearly or wholly nude; the women show little or no flesh. Draw from this whatever conclusions you wish. What offends most, though, is the film's clearly improvised quality: much of the story and most of the dialogue must have been made up during the shooting (the press kit all but admits this). You can see the actors hesitate and fumble as they try to come up with the next line, and Soderbergh clearly encouraged vocal and physical tics as a proof of naturalness. This and confinement to four tight locations (to save money) make the movie look like a series of screen tests for actors trained in the pseudo-Stanislavsky Method.

Andie MacDowell, even if not really an actress, has some touching moments; Laura San Giacomo, though badly overdirected, has spunk and a genuinely erotic voice. Peter Gallagher, who can be good, is a cipher here; the cutesy James Spader comes across as an overweight girl trying hard to deliquesce, and is infuriating in his delusions of sensitivity. Soderbergh's *sex, lies, and videotape* contributes handily to the moral untidiness it purports to anatomize. □

THE GIMLET EYE

The Making of Fat Man and Little Boy

D. KEITH MANO

I MET Dwight Schultz at the Williamstown Theater Festival in 1978. Even then, we all knew, you'd need a turnpike truck scale to weigh his talent off. Dwight had what, in anthropology, they call contagious magic. His readings were cerebral and yet instinctive. His emotional life was intense to the point of nervous exhaustion (on stage and off). His dramatic choices were provocative, quick, unusually easy, and humane. Dwight was also such a perplexing natural mimic that he could vanish in front of you at dinner.

His New York stage career has been extensive: David Mamet's *The Water Engine*, *Crucifer of Blood* (with Glenn Close), *Night and Day* (with Maggie Smith), all on Broadway. He is a powerful interpreter of Ionesco and Ibsen. But stage acting can chapter-11 you. In 1983 he left for L.A. to visit a lady friend (actress Wendy Fulton, now his wife). "I'm coming home soon," he told me over the phone. "I've just got to audition for an implausible TV pilot." That pilot was *The A Team*. It turned NBC's fortunes around. Dwight, as

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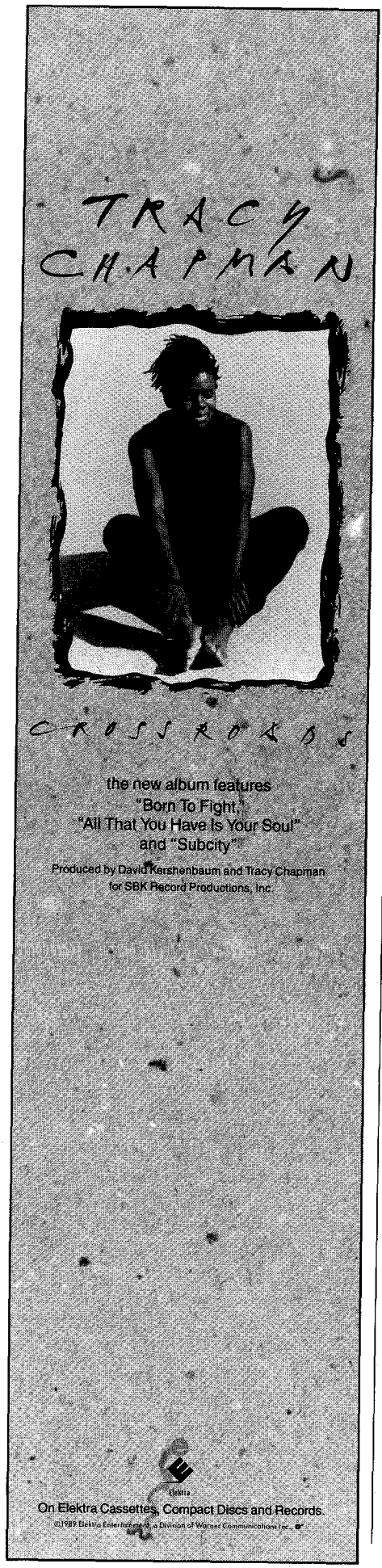
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Howling Mad Murdock, brought distinction to an otherwise shallow, if profitable, four-year enterprise.

Last autumn Roland Joffé cast Dwight (J. Robert Oppenheimer) opposite Paul Newman (Major General Leslie Groves) in *Fat Man and Little Boy*. Joffé, who "dramatized" Cambodian genocide with *The Killing Fields* (he was writer/director), had now set out to do as much for Los Alamos—which Paramount rebuilt at considerable expense near Durango, Mexico. In September the script—I have read drafts four and five of several more—had a noticeable leftward, anti-bomb bias. Ironically, Dwight, who has been known to read *NR*, was playing liberal Oppenheimer against Paul Newman as militarist Major General Groves. Newman even drives his race car to the left. Between Dwight and Newman (who thought much of the leftist shading was unbelievable) there grew up a strange-bedfellow alliance that, in time, nudged *Fat Man and Little Boy* toward ideological balance. Joffé, it must be said, gave them room to maneuver.

One resonant plot line, in particular, disturbed Dwight. Schoenfield, the young military doctor at Los Alamos, is sent on assignment to Oak Ridge. By chance he comes across Experiment P: old or mentally irregular men and women are being given radioactive polonium by injection and without their knowledge. As the fifth draft has it, "The anorexic girl looks at Schoenfield for a moment with unfocused eyes. Then, still immobile, she throws up." Strong and, well, compassionate material. (Dr. Robert Gale, a consultant on the film, told Joffé that polonium would not induce such theatrical effects. Joffé later upped the dose to *plutonium*.) Indeed, there is evidence that army doctors were performing an experiment of that sort—but no one at Los Alamos could have known it. Nonetheless Joffé shot Schoenfield in a dramatic confrontation with Oppenheimer over Experiment P. Oppenheimer replied lamely in draft five, "Look, we got technical problems to solve. That involves risk." This exchange, Dwight felt with good reason, extinguished whatever credibility as a human being Oppenheimer may have had. (Groves, Newman saw, didn't come off looking like Mother Teresa either.) That tendentious subplot was finally cut—though a vestigial—and quite opaque—reference remains in one scene.

History in our Visual Age is being asked to accommodate the strict prerequisites of a 120-minute entertainment medium: regular climax, unnatural succinctness, simplistic moral and emotional import. In *Fat Man*, for instance, Michael Merriman is exposed to radiation through an accident of heroism. He dies grotesquely. Most of the pathos in *Fat Man* is loaded on Merriman. This incident did occur—but, unaware of its responsibility to cinematic structure, it occurred a full month *after* the bomb went off, not *in medias res*. Truth is: we no longer suspend disbelief willingly. In TV, film—even stage—we prefer exaggerated half-truth to imaginative invention. Understandable enough: news is presented as entertainment on TV. (News "stories" we call them—and, in Dan Rather's case evidently, they can be more story than news.) No wonder then that truth tends to be fictionalized after it has been taken from *The Eleven O'Clock News* and recast in teleplay format. It is already half fiction. But this habit, I think, must eventually damage our perception of what has been or might be "real." Since literature can no longer hold attention with a more leisurely, reasoned POV, it is probable that your standard historical text in A.D. 2010 will be on video. But video writers are, oh, 93 per cent liberal. Their revisionism is predictable. We face a future in which American institutions will be distorted as cavalierly (and as effectively) as Shakespeare distorted the character of Richard III.

NR: What was your initial reaction on reading the script? And how did Roland Joffé respond to that reaction?

SCHULTZ: Actually I think it was because I was slightly critical of the first script that Roland was interested in me. He had promised me "a good read." And, indeed, it was. From the standpoint of a film script it was very taut—and it was very melodramatic. But, at the moment of moral revelation in the script, Oppenheimer had these puny words. I said that the author [Joffé, with Bruce Robinson] seemed afraid to express Oppenheimer's point of view. I had read Richard Rhodes's book, *The Making of the Atomic Bomb*, and there was a line

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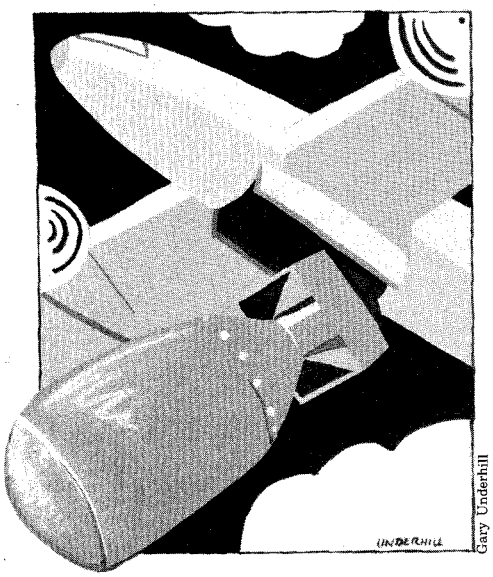
that always rang in my head—Niels Bohr, when he first came to Los Alamos in 1943, said, "Is it going to be big enough? That's the real question." The implication was that the bomb could end all war forever. I told Roland, "That's what you need in the confrontation scene with Schoenfield. Unless you express something like that you're cheating yourself and the film." And he rolled his eyes back in his head. He said, "Well, basically, I hadn't really finished this part of the screenplay. You've smelled something out. I just inserted dialogue that had originally been General Groves's dialogue there." It was weak, very weak.

NR: What's Joffé like?

SCHULTZ: Roland is a very complex



Gary Underhill

fellow. Very cerebral on the outside. But when we would sit and talk, he became extremely emotional and had a very hard time holding back tears. He obviously had a great feeling for the people involved in this. He, as I, saw Oppenheimer as a victim of the period—from both the right and the left politically. He wanted to examine the dilemma—that's the way he put it to me. The human dilemma.

NR: Roughly how many drafts were there between the script you auditioned with and the final cut?

SCHULTZ: I think there were four or five. The script always changed. Roland was making three films. Every time we did a scene there were three possibilities that we could end up with. Over a period of four months that's a lot of permutations. Roland said, "You don't know what kind of movie you're making until you're making it."

NR: Three different movies?

SCHULTZ: One was very intellectual, devoid of emotion. There was one that was a soap opera—which was very interesting—when you started to delve into the history of the characters. You were mind-boggled that these were the people who built the atomic bomb. And then there was another film—which was about human beings, who are very fallible, called upon to do the impossible. This was the in-between version.

NR: You talk about how "we" did the rewriting. Who were the main rewriters?

SCHULTZ: I met with Paul Newman in his New York apartment the day after I had been cast. There he was with his script all over the floor. He was rewriting. I didn't know I had permission to go ahead and rewrite Joffé's script. But Paul had done it. So I assumed immediately that this was something Roland was amenable to. So Paul and I sat down and hashed it out. In Mexico it was a round table, scene by scene, we'd sit there and argue. I was certainly low man on the totem pole. But I was on the totem pole. And I was never treated with disrespect.

NR: Is that a good way for an actor to work?

SCHULTZ: I was scared to death. You're suddenly thrust into a room with Paul Newman and Roland Joffé and you're . . . scared. This was my first feature film. I hadn't been given time to relax with the role. It was a baptism of fire.

NR: This is perhaps the most "unsympathetic" role that Newman has ever played. Why do you think he chose to do it?

SCHULTZ: Well, on more than one occasion he said, "Oh, my God, what're my liberal friends going to say?" When we would argue about Groves's position—*he* would come up with the good arguments for Groves. And we would laugh. He really is a good fellow. Politically he baited me on many occasions. Once, in a restaurant, we got a little heated—he sort of assumed I believed certain things because I was one of "those" kind of people. And I took him to task for it—and he apologized for what he said. But he was very dedicated to preserving the integrity of the people who fought World War II. He was on board ship, not far from Japan, when

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they dropped the weapon. He was one of many who didn't have to give up their lives because of the bomb.

NR: Tell us more about Experiment P.

SCHULTZ: When Paul read the script he was quite flabbergasted at this. He didn't believe it. Neither did I. Paul had a direct line to the political hierarchies of this country. He was calling people, Senate committees. He was friendly with Richard Rhodes and commissioned him to find out about it. Experiment P did happen. The Markey Committee has it on record. But if it had stayed in the film, you could have understood it to mean that this was government policy, which made us look like bedpartners to the Nazis. Paul and I were very distressed about this. Roland was not, however. He felt it was something to be explored. But, in the context of the movie, it would've had a disproportionate effect. And no one at Los Alamos knew about it. Certainly not Oppenheimer. But it's not in the film now. I'm grateful for that. And I respect Roland for taking it out. [At the time this interview took place, Dwight had not yet seen *Fat Man* in final cut. He thought—since his confrontation with Schoenfield was due for dubbing anyhow because of poor sound quality—that "plutonium" at least would be lip synced to "polonium." A simple matter. Yet, with total disregard for fact, and gratuitously, it would appear (the vomit scene had been cut after all), Joffé let "plutonium" stand.]

NR: Where was [atom spy] Klaus Fuchs at this time?

SCHULTZ: He was there.

NR: Well, since we're talking about significant omissions, why wasn't Fuchs in the script? Instead of Merriman, for instance, whose death came after Trinity?

SCHULTZ: I felt the same way: I often asked, why aren't we dealing with this? Then you realize you just don't have time to get into it. I certainly would've liked to have seen Oppenheimer much more ferociously in favor of the project.

NR: Tell us about your interpretation of Oppenheimer.

SCHULTZ: One of the sad things about *Fat Man* is—there are no scenes where Oppenheimer is brilliant. Oppenheimer was involved in the project before he was picked by Groves to lead it. So the film is a little misleading there. But I want you to hear Oppenheimer actually speak. [Puts on a tape—I hear a strangely cadenced voice, a bit prissy and over-precise.] This is Oppenheimer right after Trinity—what I call his "Mr. Rogers" voice. [He imitates Oppenheimer.] He was ed-u-cayted in Yurope andt spoke five dif-*fer*-ent languages flu-ently. If yew were to per-form on film yusing this voice, yew would prob-ably have gret dy-fi-culty in ac-*cess*-ing the American *pub*-lic. Roland rolled his eyes at the thought of me using Oppenheimer's cadences. It was a different world. People then thought him elegant and intellectual. Today they would say he was rather fey. So Roland decided to make him generic. Because this is not a movie about Oppenheimer—to my dismay [laughs]. This is a movie about the dilemma.

NR: Do you think Oppenheimer was dealt with fairly?

SCHULTZ: I do. Because I think he is

μαθήματα: *The things that can be understood or learned*

(mathemata)

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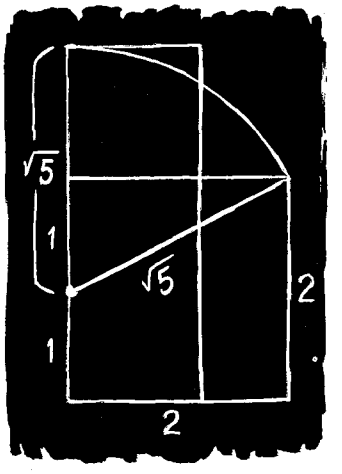

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seen as the victim—and I think he was a victim. The problem is—Roland tried to combine Oppenheimer's past, present, and future in one film. Groves and Oppenheimer were in agreement that the weapon had to be utilized. If people did not see how terrible war was going to be in the future, the effort would've been wasted. *Later* Oppenheimer came to feel that—the day after Trinity—we should have been on everyone's heels to get this thing under control. But in *Fat Man* Oppenheimer's feelings after Trinity are anticipated. The more I read, the angrier I became at the scientists. Many of them ran out the back door, some after VE Day, some after Hiroshima. It was Einstein and Szilard and Fermi who were responsible for Roosevelt's using his influence to get the project under way. The military didn't want to get involved—they had a war to fight. Then Oppenheimer was left with the burden. I shouldn't say left with it—because I think he wanted it. But he took the moral responsibility. A lot of people want to talk. Very few want to take responsibility. When you see Oppenheimer later he looks like a victim from Auschwitz. I think he was down to 105 pounds.

NR: What was the political tone on the set?

SCHULTZ: I think it's fair to say that most people were doing the movie because they abhorred the bomb and the whole concept of having developed it. There were very few people who understood what we were dealing with in World War II. Most were totally unaware of the extent of the carnage. Sixty million was just not conceivable to most people. They were sure I was wrong. Roland didn't know. Paul's eyes lowered and he said, "My God, was it that many?" The horror is so great that we minimize it. All these people were imagining a much smaller war. From what I have read there were less than 200,000 killed between Hiroshima and Nagasaki. When you factor that into sixty million—or the amount of people who would've been killed in an invasion—the bomb seems almost reasonable. If Churchill and Roosevelt hadn't gone ahead and developed this weapon, God knows what we'd be talking about today. If Stalin was willing to kill thirty million of his own people . . .

NR: And yet, in a human sense, the bomb was never reasonable.

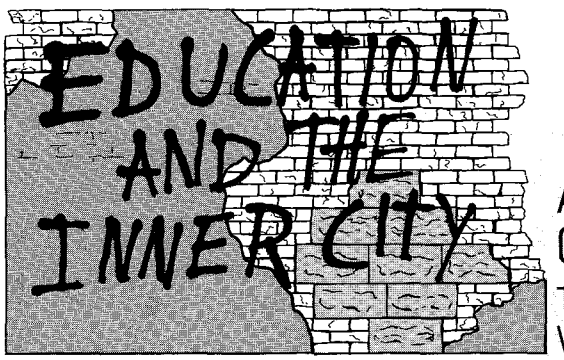
SCHULTZ: No. Robert Cornog was a consultant on the set. He had been one of the chief engineers at Los Alamos. Dr. Robert Gale showed us films and slides of radiation burns. At one point Bob Cornog gasped aloud—it was at a photo of a victim from Hiroshima. And it was very moving. To say that all those people died for the betterment of the rest of us is a futile gesture to someone who was directly responsible for the death of that many men, women, and children. It's one of those things that's best left alone. You can't objectify it away. I saw it there on his face. □

BOOKS IN BRIEF

The Best of Rilke, translated by Walter Arndt, foreword by Cyrus Hamlin (University Press of New England, 192 pp., $17.95)

RAINER MARIA RILKE (1875–1926) was one of the most important poets of the European modernist movement. He underwent a poetic sea-change analogous to that of Yeats—from an 1890s aestheticism to a complex, original voice. There have been many Rilke translations, especially of the *Duino Elegies* and the *Sonnets to Orpheus*, but Walter Arndt's may be the best introduction to the master's work. Rilke's original German is printed on the left page, Arndt's English translation on the right, permitting the reader to make comparisons, evaluations, and even decisions. One of the very greatest modernist poems is Rilke's "*Der Panther*." In an appendix, Arndt provides a brilliant discussion of the decisions he made translating this poem about the imprisoned self, the buried life, exemplified by a caged panther in the zoo at the Jardin des Plantes in Paris. "His gaze has been so worn by the procession / Of bars that it no longer makes a bond . . ." The volume includes a brief biography, and an academic introduction by Cyrus Hamlin of Yale. Skip Hamlin; meet Rilke.

—JEFFREY HART



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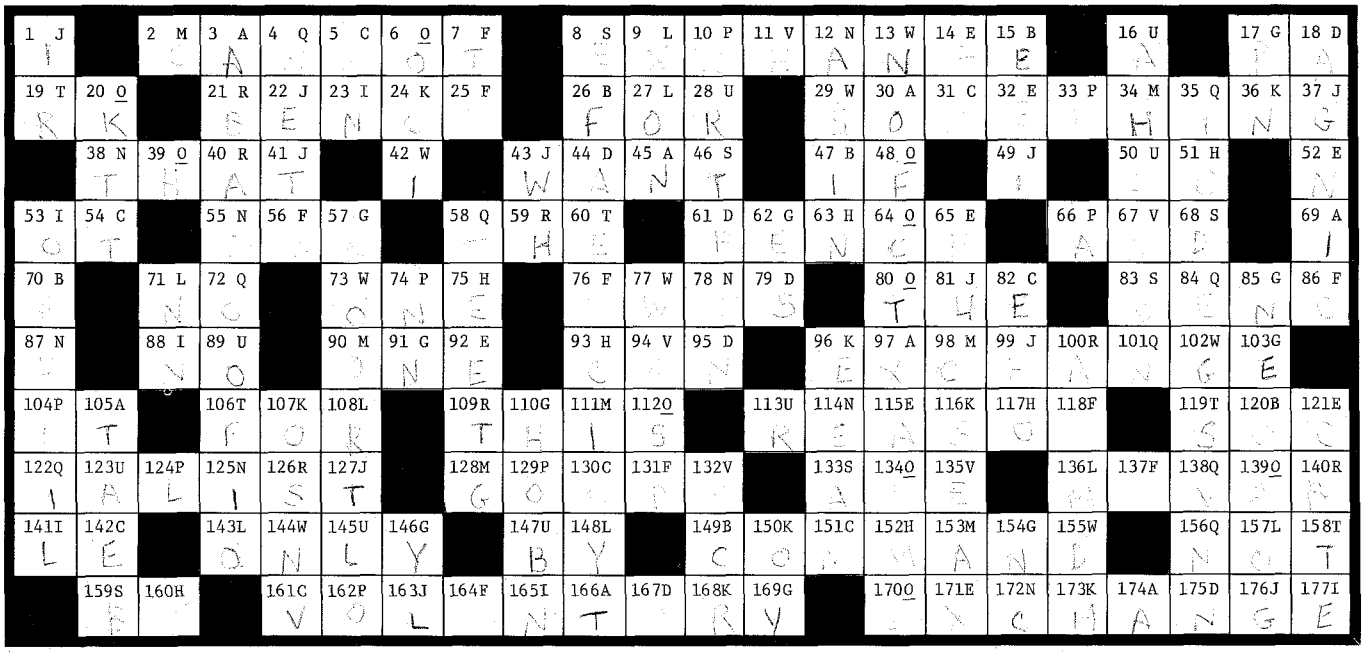

DEFINITIONS

A. Its prerequisite is representation — 166 174 97 3 105 69 30 45

B. Campaigners seek this — 120 70 26 47 149 15

C. Progress — 151 130 161 82 31 142 5 54

D. Crazy for a certain fruit? — 61 167 175 44 95 18 79

E. Swap — 92 171 121 65 115 52 14 32

F. Way to score in football — 7 76 164 86 25 131 137 56 118

G. Noted fictional doomsayer — 110 62 154 57 169 17 103 91 85 146

H. Frugality (liberals take note) — 75 93 117 63 51 152 160

I. Revolutionary Beatle? — 141 177 165 23 53 88

J. Boxing classification — 163 49 37 99 127 43 22 1 176 81 41

K. "Vessel" used for drinking beer — 116 24 173 150 107 36 96 168

L. Subject of *NR* contest — 143 9 148 136 157 108 27 71

M. Hog butcher to the world — 98 34 111 2 153 128 90

N. Just begun — 125 78 172 87 55 12 38 114

O. Earthquake's last hurrah — 139 48 80 170 134 112 39 6 64 20

P. Place — 124 162 10 66 33 104 129 74

Q. Necessity's offspring — I N V E N T I O N — 122 156 138 84 4 58 35 72 101

R. Holy day — 126 100 140 21 40 109 59

S. Selected — 46 133 159 83 8 68

T. Irritated guitar parts — 106 19 60 158 119

U. Dependency of Newfoundland — 145 123 147 113 16 50 89 28

V. Pale — 94 132 11 135 67

W. Melodious sound of breeze in the trees (2 words) — 77 42 144 155 29 73 13 102

DIRECTIONS

The object of TRANS-O-GRAM is to fill in the puzzle diagram by guessing the words from their definitions, and transferring each letter of the guessed word to the correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. When the diagram is filled in it will spell out a quotation from some published work (reading normally from left to right, black boxes indicating the ends of words); also, when the words have all been filled in above, their initial letters will spell out the author and title of the quoted work. The acrostic feature, and the relative word-lengths in the diagram, will assist in the solution. Spelling and definitions on the authority of *Webster's New International Dictionary*, Second Edition. **See page 69 for solution to last Trans-O-Gram.**

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Poor Jim Baker!

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 3

The vicissitudes of foreign affairs are so overwhelming as to leave breathless critics with the sole alternative of complaining that President Bush and James Baker have no "strategy." That criticism can be made in a polemical courtroom, but we should look at some of the problems they are facing before plunking down a facile answer to all of them.

—There is China. China, celebrating the fortieth anniversary of its People's Revolution, lacking only people to celebrate it. Those who came close enough to Tiananmen Square to qualify for admission needed to be searched and identified. There they could ponder forty years, including the period during which a hundred flowers were supposed to bloom, for every one of which about ten thousand Chinese were killed. Then the Cultural Revolution, which was the greatest assault on culture up until Pol Pot decided to eliminate literacy from Cambodia. Followed by a general relaxation of controls that came to a sharp end last June when young Chinese began to take literally what they had thought of as encouragement to democratize their Revolution. The United States has simultaneously to paw the ground with legitimate indignation at the brutality of the June repression while studiously avoiding any geopolitical rupture of the kind that would accelerate the banns of Sino-Soviet affection. Not at all easy, not at all.

—The Israelis invented the word *chutzpah* and there ain't anybody in the world who can practice it the way they can. The sequence goes as follows: 1) Our secretary of state gives a speech telling the Israelis that they must really cut out planting fresh settlers in the West Bank, against the terms of the Camp David Accords. The United States then puts extra pressure on the Soviet Union to release Russian Jews who are anxious to leave. But once the Jews receive their visas, the great majority express a wish to settle down—not in Israel, but in the United States. Israel does not like this, because it needs a Jewish population to guard against being dysgenically overwhelmed by Arabs, who procreate with the speed of light. So . . . we contrive to reroute the Russian Jews to Israel, and Israel tells them to go settle in the West Bank, and then turns to the State Department and says: Please send us four hundred million dollars more to help build houses for the Russian Jews to settle in the West Bank. We can only assume that when Jim Baker heard that one he stomped out of his office and ordered—a hot dog.

—And then there is Colombia. Two weeks ago, President Bush tells all the world that in his war on drugs, Colombia will figure critically. After all, Colombia is the hotbed of the cocaine export trade, and Colombia has suffered most drastically from the effort to reduce, indeed to eliminate, that export. The man who would be president—and had a good chance of becoming president—was assassinated. The minister of justice finally, well, just plain gave up, after her family was threatened several times. There is, in much of metropolitan Colombia something like a *de facto* curfew, so militantly in control of the streets is the drug-merchant class. And last weekend the news came in that the Colombian population is—tiring of the fight. That there are politicians there, increasingly popular, who are saying: The hell with it. "Let's grow the stuff and ship it out and let the United States worry about Americans who want to poison themselves by paying for it. That's their concern, not ours. Ours is to do what we can to save our republic." What do Bush–Baker–Bennett say in reply to that?

—Now the Soviet Union seems to be coming apart. It can't feed its own population, or clothe it, or, for that matter, keep it sober. And then there is the centrifugal dynamism, growing, growing, to the point where little Latvia simply announces that it is going to go independent, which is something like, oh, Nantucket announcing that it is going to leave the Union. This, plus thousands upon thousands of East German refugees—and the East Germans are the spoiled men of the satellite empire—rushing through the hole in the Wall, via Hungary, to breathe freedom in West Germany. We can't stop them and won't, obviously; but the State Department does worry that the deterioration in Gorbachev's control of his own country could —well, could convulse Eastern Europe. And after that? What is our strategy then? If you have the answer to this, call Jim Baker, collect. □

The Panamanian Mess

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 6

Concerning that festival of indecision in Washington last Tuesday, a few observations:

1. We are very much behind in our judicial thinking in international affairs. This is a point to be stressed, that we, repeat we, are behind in our thinking—because international law is pretty much whatever we—or the Soviet Union—or Patagonia—says it is. We have a World Court, but it is heavily political and has, in the past, contradicted itself. When President Reagan, under the urging of William Casey, decided to blockade Nicaragua, Nicaragua took its complaint to the World Court and won. That decision froze the thinking of some American legislators, most conspicuously Daniel Patrick Moynihan, who treated the finding of the Court as though it had been conceived on Mt. Sinai. The Court was not implausible in its finding. It affronts common sense simultaneously to recognize a government (as Reagan recognized the government of the Sandinistas) and then to proceed to attempt to subvert it (which we happily did, giving aid to the Contras, and blockading its ports).

2. Panama presents an especially ambiguous problem, because we take the position that the election ostensibly won by Noriega's candidate was a fraud. Indeed there were abundant witnesses to the grand political larceny by which Noriega's candidate, Carlos Duque, was named the victor over the opposition candidate, Guillermo Endara. Dis-

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interested observers on the scene guessed that Mr. Endara was the choice of the people by a vote of 2 to 1.

But the conventional presumption is that the United States recognizes the *de facto* government, no matter how it got there. There are exceptions to this rule. In 1962, President Kennedy delayed for a period recognizing a new government in Peru. If it were the responsibility of the United States to determine who was the democratic choice in the majority of African countries, and in every country in the Mideast with the exception of Israel, our State Department would be frozen into inactivity, which is the condition it appeared to be in last Tuesday.

3. The situation in Panama is complicated in our favor. This is so because the treaty concluded with President Carter and ratified in 1979 gives the United States unambiguous rights to act on any threat to free passage through the Canal. We say "unambiguous" even though General Torrijos, who was then the caudillo in Panama, undertook to improvise his own understanding of U.S. rights in a document that was not the treaty acted upon by the Senate. The U.S. general who has observed goings-on in Panama during the past two years reported several months ago that there were over two hundred infractions, under the government of which Noriega is in charge, of the provisions of the treaty. Under those circumstances, we have a right under the treaty to assert ourselves, and the only way to assert ourselves effectively in Panama is to go down there and oust the dictator and principal troublemaker, General Noriega.

4. Coups conducted by Marquis of Queensberry rules are quite difficult to effect. And they very much depend on cooperation by the victim. If Noriega had obliged his captors by putting on a red wig and diving into the trunk of a car headed for a nearby airfield and then flying to Miami to submit to the federal court that has indicted him, that would have been enormously convenient all the way around. But what he said was: If you want me to do anything other than to stay here until my loyal troops rescue me, you will need to kill me. None of his captors chose to press the trigger, and we do not know whether they asked the United States whether it would be okay by the Stars and Stripes if they did execute Noriega.

5. Which reminds us that Senator Joseph Lieberman of Connecticut recently introduced a bill to rescind that act of 1975 that forbade the Chief Executive to authorize an assassination under any circumstances. His reasoning was that the big drug merchants regularly engage in killing, and regularly kill U.S. allies democratically chosen, and that if we are going to render effective help to these allies, every now and again we are going to have to cooperate in killing somebody, as we did (this is me talking, not Lieberman) Che Guevara in 1967. That bill is wandering about in no-man's-land in the Senate, and it is conceivable that Washington refused to encourage the rebels to go ahead and shoot Noriega because of that 1975 ruling.

6. The situation is a mess. And we have succeeded in blowing the opposition to Noriega and almost surely effecting their execution. That this should have happened under a President who was once head of the CIA is dumbfounding. □

Meeting with Milken

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 27

For reasons not particularly relevant, I found myself lunching a few days ago with Michael Milken. He is (of course) the great financial figure, the youngish genius who so to speak invented the junk bond, and whose spectacular activities on behalf of the firm of Drexel Burnham Lambert were interrupted by the Federal Government's handing down a 98-count indictment of him. The feds charge insider trading and a number of other activities, some of them nefarious, some of them—well, that is one of the reasons so many people are interested in Mr. Milken: has he, in his revolutionary lifetime, resituated the ethical norms of business conduct in such a way as to earn universal contumely? Or—is he engaged in adding to the business experience in an innovative way, and in a way that in the years to come the economic community will welcome on the grounds that it is transparently productive?

When you meet with Mr. Milken (or at least, when I meet with him) you meet at the same time with his lawyer, and with a couple of aides. The situation is not for that reason sclerotic. Those of us who have had experiences with the SEC, even when no criminal activity was alleged, have got used to the governing protocols. And although Mr. Milken is these days doing a fair amount of public speaking, under no circumstances is he permitted by counsel to speak about The Case against him. That was okay by me, but I also brought along my own attorney, a gentleman with vast knowledge of tax law and, come to think of it, of most other things also.

Milken is a poet of sorts, and there is no point at all in disputing his charismatic personality. He speaks about stocks and bonds and bank loans and thrifts as St. Francis would have spoken of starlings and doves and fawns. It requires very little time to know that one is exposed to someone whose knowledge of the business world is encyclopedic: he was always impressive, back at the Wharton Business School, and back in the days when he took the early morning bus to New York from New Jersey (he hates New York) wearing a miner's light to facilitate his reading.

He engages in very broad metaphors. For instance, he remarked that he never thought he would live to see the day when banks would be forbidden to make loans to women, blacks, or Hispanics. That is Milkenese for the new law that seeks to limit the kind of loans made by the S&Ls, for which loans our grandchildren will be paying. That law lays down restrictions that cannot be met by start-up companies; and indeed, most of the blue-ribbon companies that borrow from banks are headed by male Anglo-Saxons. But of course there are other ways to put it.

His vision is interesting. The huge sums of money lent by the Bank of America to Mexico and to Argentina brought the most paradoxical of results. The Bank of America fed money to nations which don't have the resources to repay it, resulting in a heavy depletion of the resources of what used to be the world's largest bank. Meanwhile, Japanese banks send their money over to U.S. enterprises our banks cannot patronize: and what happens? Wonderful economic results for America, while Japanese banks prosper, and the banking resources of the United States diminish. One is reminded of Milton Friedman's recommendation that there be two kinds of banks. The first would be limited to investing in government bonds, and depositors in those banks would be guaranteed against loss. The second kind of bank would proceed under no restrictions whatever: but neither would its depositors be protected by the Federal Government. Milken nods when reminded of this, and one doesn't quite know whether he approves or disapproves.

The lawyers don't mind admitting that to be prosecuted under the RICO act (designed for racketeers) has dire effects on the defendant, whose assets can be frozen by the government. And all hands present agree that the RICO act was underexamined by Congress when passed, and is being used with some abandon by energetic prosecutors like Rudy Giuliani, who is running for mayor of New York. Mr. Milken can manage to pay his lawyers and aides because freezing the assets of Michael Milken is on the order of freezing the existing production of Saudi Arabian oil. As H. L. Hunt once put it, "If they took everything from me on Monday, I'd be rich again on Saturday."

Much will be written about the Milken case when it comes up for trial some time after next March. And it is a story interesting in every sense. Human, of course; but it is perhaps even epochal in the evolution of American commerce. The trial of the junk bond. □

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OFF THE RECORD

■ What is a sound thinker like Tom Campbell doing sponsoring a bill to roll back a Supreme Court victory on civil rights? A first-term Republican representative from California, Mr. Campbell was formerly with the anti-trust division of the Federal Trade Commission, and before that with the Justice Department. He boasts a PhD from the University of Chicago, where his dissertation was on gender discrimination. Associates say that in the past Mr. Campbell distinguished himself in the battle for a color-blind Constitution.

Yet Congressman Campbell was first out of the gate with a bill that would overturn the recent *Wards Cove Packing* v. *Antonio* decision, wherein the Court held that statistics alone were not enough to prove racial discrimination. All his bill would do, Mr. Campbell says, is "take us back to the way the law was before June of this year." He insists that there is nothing in it requiring quotas, and he even managed to get a number of other conservatives to sign on to his bill, including Robert S. Walker (R., Pa.).

But critics charge that although the Campbell bill does not *mandate* quotas, it would, by forcing firms to prove "business necessity" in areas of racial imbalance, leave those firms with the choice of adopting quotas or risking litigation. It's interesting to note, moreover, that the only other bill comparable to Mr. Campbell's is a Senate version sponsored by Howard Metzenbaum (D., Ohio). Speculation on the Hill is that Mr. Campbell's turnaround is an attempt to position himself as a moderate in a race for the Senate seat of arch-liberal Alan Cranston.

■ Meanwhile, down the road at the White House, the Bush Administration has revealed a similar confusion about who its friends are. A group of Vietnamese-Americans (organized in part by the Interfaith Committee for Refugee Concerns), all bearing American flags and singing the "Star-Spangled Banner," gathered in Lafayette Park to express their support for the Administration's opposition to the forced repatriation of boat people. This position, stated by Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger this June at a UN-sponsored conference in Geneva, puts the U.S. squarely at odds with Great Britain, which wants to force boat people back to Communist Vietnam against their will. Britain is expected to send the first load back from Hong Kong any day now.

Yet the only official the White House could rustle up to receive the marchers' petition was a low-level PR flack, and that only after repeated phone calls. So much for a Republican rainbow coalition.

And the *Washington Post*? No mention the next day. Instead, the top of page one was taken up by a photo of the AIDS quilt that had been spread out on the other side of the White House that same day.

■ Of course, this isn't the first time the *Post* has missed a story. Ever since 1980 the *Post* editorial page has been consistently wrong in its analyses of the United States economy, with parallel implications for its policy recommendations. Here are some of the highlights:

In 1980, we were told that the U.S. had entered into an era of "permanent stagflation" and "economic malaise." This was right before the longest peacetime economic expansion in U.S. history began, an expansion that continues today.

In 1981, the *Post* said President Reagan's tax-rate reductions would be inflationary. Actually, inflation fell.

In 1982, the *Post* cited the budget deficit as the culprit that would lead to high inflation. Inflation fell again.

In 1983, the deficit was once more making headlines, but this time the *Post* told us the deficit would abort an economic recovery. Six years later, the recovery continues.

In 1984, the deficit was blamed for the rise of the dollar. But the dollar stopped rising.

In 1985, we were told the deficit would prevent the dollar from falling. It fell anyway.

In 1986, the *Post* said the fall of the dollar meant that the American economy was heading toward recession and that the budget deficit would be more than $300 billion by fiscal year 1988. Instead, the economy grew and the deficit fell. For FY1988, the figure was $155.1 billion.

In 1987, the evil deficit was held responsible for the decline of the dollar and an increase in the U.S. trade deficit, yet the dollar leveled off and the trade deficit declined.

In 1988, the *Post* reported that the deficit was still of crisis proportions. In fact the deficit has been falling; in 1983 the deficit was 6.3 per cent of GNP and today it is estimated at about 3.2 per cent of GNP.

Now the *Post* insists that a cut in the capital-gains-tax rate will benefit only the rich and do nothing to spur economic growth; yet the 1978 and 1981 cuts in capital-gains-tax rates produced billions of dollars in added revenue, revitalized the venture-capital markets, and helped create millions of new jobs.

Obviously, the time to get nervous is if the *Post* ever predicts a boom. —CATO

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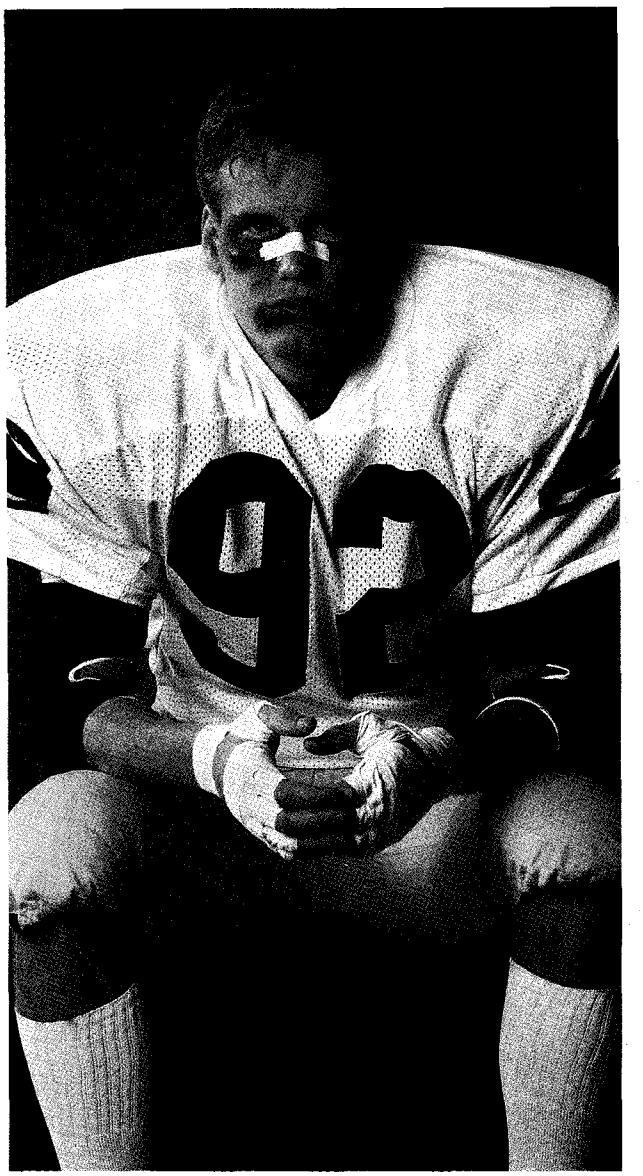

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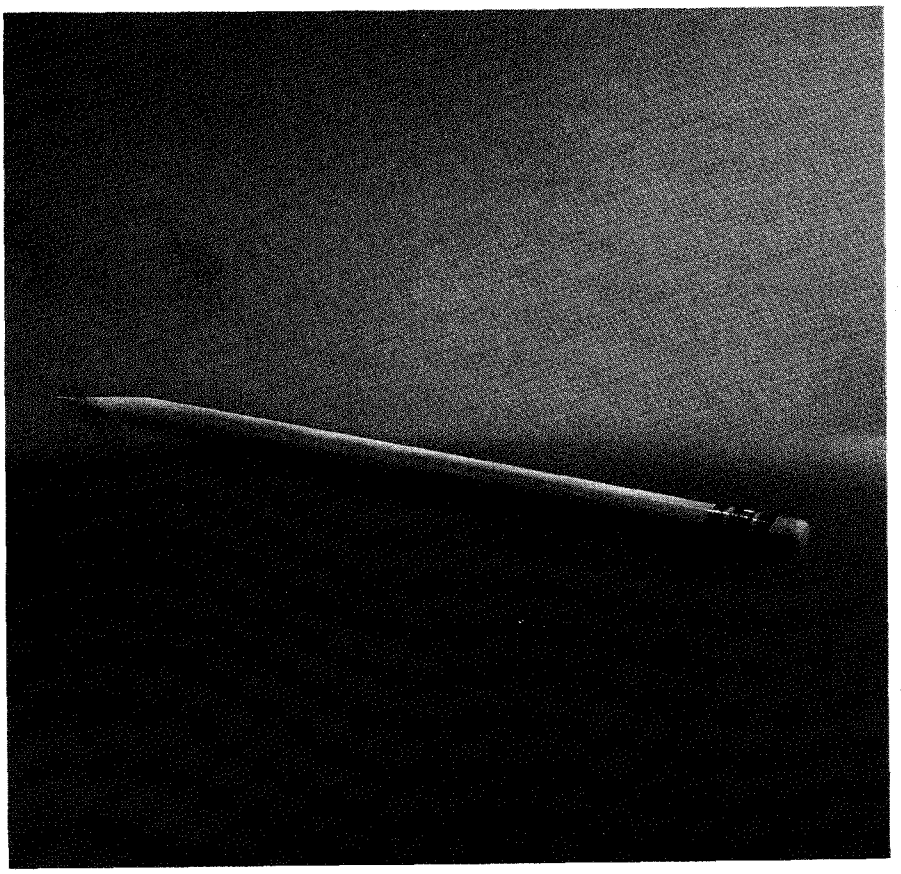

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